

# 2017 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan

For Pierce County and the  
Cities of Blackshear and Patterson



Adopted June 6, 2017

Prepared for Pierce County and the  
Cities of Blackshear and Patterson  
by:



Page left blank

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. Chapter 110-12-1. Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning..... - 4 -

    1. Introduction ..... - 4 -

    2. Community Involvement ..... - 4 -

    3. Identification of Stakeholders..... - 4 -

    4. Identification of Participation Techniques ..... - 4 -

    5. Conduct Participation Program..... - 5 -

    6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria ..... - 5 -

        Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan ..... - 5 -

        Chapter 391-3-16, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria ..... - 8 -

II. Plan Elements ..... - 9 -

    1. Community Vision and Goals ..... - 9 -

        Vision ..... - 9 -

        Goals ..... - 9 -

    2. Issues and Opportunities ..... - 10 -

        I. Economic Development ..... - 10 -

        II. Housing ..... - 10 -

        III. Natural Resources..... - 11 -

        IV. Cultural Resources ..... - 11 -

        V. Community Facilities and Services ..... - 11 -

        VI. Transportation ..... - 12 -

        VII. Intergovernmental Coordination..... - 12 -

        VIII. Land Use..... - 12 -

    3. Analysis of Data and Information..... - 13 -

    4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives ..... - 17 -

    5. Community Policies ..... - 20 -

        I. Economic Development ..... - 20 -

        II. Housing ..... - 20 -

        III. Natural Resources..... - 21 -

        IV. Cultural Resources ..... - 22 -

        V. Community Facilities and Services ..... - 23 -

        VI. Transportation ..... - 23 -

        VII. Intergovernmental Coordination..... - 24 -

        VIII. Land Use..... - 24 -

    6. Community Work Program ..... - 25 -

        Report Of Accomplishments: Pierce County 5-Year Short-Term Work Program ..... - 25 -

        Pierce County 5-Year Community Work Program Update..... - 32 -

        City of Blackshear 5-Year Community Work Program Update ..... - 36 -

        City of Patterson 5-Year Community Work Program Update..... - 38 -

    7. Land Use Element ..... - 40 -

        I. Character Areas ..... - 40 -

            Residential Character Area ..... - 41 -

            Neighborhood (Declining) Character Area ..... - 43 -

            Agricultural/Forestry Character Area ..... - 45 -

            Employment Center – Industrial Character Area ..... - 47 -

            Employment Center – Commercial/Office Character Area ..... - 49 -

            Downtown Character Areas ..... - 51 -

            Public/Institutional Character Area ..... - 53 -

            Parks/Recreation/Conservation Character Area ..... - 54 -

            Transportation/Communication/Utilities Character Area ..... - 56 -

        II. Maps..... - 58 -

Appendix ..... - 61 -

## **I. Chapter 110-12-1. Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning**

### **1. Introduction**

The 2017 Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Joint Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2017 Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Joint Comprehensive Plan Update consists of the following elements:

1. Community Goals
2. Needs and Opportunities
3. Community Work Program
4. Land Use Element  
(as a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)

### **2. Community Involvement**

All of the required elements have been developed with extensive opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders throughout the County and Cities. The following steps were taken to ensure that this plan reflected the full range of needs and opportunities from the many stakeholders and residents:

- a) Stakeholders were identified. These included the local governments; local businesses and industries; law enforcement; Fire Departments; the Pierce County Emergency Management Agency; the Board of Education; the Pierce County Industrial Development Authority; and the general public.
- b) Participation techniques were identified. Techniques used included a kick-off public information meeting, printed public information in local newspapers, and information on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's website and local government websites. A steering committee was formed to oversee and participate in planned development, including representatives from the stakeholders mentioned above.
- c) A participation program was conducted. Identified stakeholders were invited and attended, yielding specific input in plan content. The steering committee held regular meetings to provide input and feedback.

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on Jan. 3, 2016 at the NFC Building in Blackshear. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway; to explain the purpose of the update; and to encourage residents and other stakeholders to participate actively in the plan update.

### **3. Identification of Stakeholders**

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was put together with input from the local governments. A complete list of all the stakeholders is included in this plan in the Appendix.

### **4. Identification of Participation Techniques**

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:

Public Hearings

Workshops

Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders

Announcements on SGRC website as well as the local government websites

Dissemination of information in the newspaper

## **5. Conduct Participation Program**

A foundational principle utilized by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in all of its planning projects is public and stakeholder participation from, and coordination with, multiple and diverse interest groups. Due to the relatively small population of the Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, the entire stakeholder group was utilized as the steering committee, ensuring the broadest buy-in and diversity of input into the comprehensive plan update. Outreach to the public, local governments, and other stakeholders and interested parties was accomplished by e-mail correspondence, direct communication, social media postings, the project website, and updates provided at workshops and at other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was provided at public hearings and at City and County commission meetings.

In addition to the two required public hearings, SGRC held a series of three workshops to discuss several elements of the plan. Copies of the sign-in sheets are provided in the appendix along with public hearing notices. The first workshop was used to review the goals, issues, and opportunities; through open discussion, a consensus was reached as to what changes and updates should be made to the existing goals, issues, and opportunities from the prior Comprehensive Plan, and notes taken by SGRC staff during the workshop were used to update these sections of the plan document. The Community Policies and Report of Accomplishments were developed in the second workshop, along with the draft of the updated Community Work Program. The Community Work Program was developed by the participants to include specific action items and projects that would be feasible for the individual communities to implement, should funding be available. The third workshop was utilized to update the Land Use Element and Maps.

## **6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria**

During the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the local governments must review both the Regional Water Plan covering its area and the GDNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria, as laid out in Chapter 391-3-16, to determine whether any local implementation practices or development regulations need to be adapted to be consistent with both.

### **Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan**

Pierce County is within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was adopted in September 2011.



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan has identified 13 goals, listed below, to implement its vision of managing water resources in a sustainable manner under Georgia’s regulated riparian and reasonable use laws in order to support the state’s and region’s economy, protect public health and natural resources, and enhance the quality of life for all citizens; while preserving the private property rights of Georgia’s landowners, and in consideration of the need to enhance resource augmentation and efficiency opportunities.

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agro-forestry).
2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.
3. Manage the Region’s and State’s water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.
4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.
5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and to optimize water and wastewater infrastructure.
6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.
7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.
8. Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.

9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.
10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater so as to improve water quality and quantity.
11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource services to all citizens in the region.
13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

In addition, the Regional Water Plan has adopted several Short-Term Water Quantity and Water Quality Management Practices, which the local comprehensive plan should include in order to manage water resources in a sustainable manner through the planning period and beyond. The most significant issues in the Suwannee-Satilla Region are surface water availability gaps driven by agricultural usage. As such, the majority of water supply management practices are intended to address agricultural surface water use.

#### Short Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0-10 Years)

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Conserve water
3. Collect data and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps
4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (the period of lowest stream flow during a seven-day interval that is expected to occur once every 10 years)
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

#### Short-Term Water Quality Management Practices (0 – 10 Years):

##### 1. Point Sources:

- Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity
- Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry

##### 2. Non-Point Sources:

- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage stormwater ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
- Ensure funding and support for local and state Best Management Practices programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices

##### 3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:

- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; identify opportunities to leverage funds, and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

Longer Term (20 – 40 years) water quantity and quality management practices include:

- Improve infiltration and management of wetlands

- Evaluate incentive-based programs to manage, increase, and restore wastewater and storm water returns
- Identify potential/feasibility of a multi-purpose reservoir
- Identify feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
- Continue wastewater and stormwater master planning

**Chapter 391-3-16, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria**

The Environmental Planning Criteria that are part of the Minimum Planning Standards deal specifically with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors, and mountains, the last of which is not applicable in this region. These criteria were developed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as mandated in Part V of the Georgia Planning Act and in the Mountains and River Corridor Protection Act.

The criteria require that local governments shall identify existing and future water supply watersheds and adopt a water supply watershed protection plan for their jurisdiction.

Some uses may be grandfathered, such as land uses existing prior to the adoption of a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, certain utilities placements, special forestry, or agricultural services.

The environmental guidelines also spell out criteria for the delineation of small and large water supply watersheds, for the protection of groundwater recharge areas, for the protection of wetlands, and for the protection of river corridors. These criteria shall be incorporated into this comprehensive plan and addressed specifically and in more detail through local ordinances and land development code regulations.



## II. Plan Elements

### 1. Community Vision and Goals

#### Vision

- **Foster community pride and community ownership;**
- **Continue efforts for a higher quality of life for all the citizenry;**
- **Promote not only economic stability but also economic growth;**
- **Foster a safe and secure environment for all the community.**

#### Goals

To Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, this vision means:

- 1) **Economic Development Goal**  
Being a community where new development and/or redevelopment is a high priority, approached from a standpoint of flexibility;
- 2) **Housing Goal**  
Promoting an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community;
- 3) **Natural Resources Goal**  
Being a community where the natural environment is respected and preserved, including but not limited to agricultural/forestry land and its watershed (Satilla, Little Satilla and Alabaha Rivers). Opportunities to provide additional greenways, parkland and other open space features will be sought as new development is integrated into the community;
- 4) **Cultural Resources Goal**  
Protecting and enhancing the community's unique qualities;
- 5) **Community Facilities Goal**  
Having exemplary educational and recreational facilities; providing infrastructure and services in a cost-effective manner in order to maintain a high quality of life;
- 6) **Transportation Goal**  
Addressing the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents;
- 7) **Intergovernmental Coordination Goal**  
Ensuring excellent collaboration and cooperation between local governments; and
- 8) **Land Use Goal**  
Having distinct character areas that reflect the community's unique identity.

## **2. Issues and Opportunities**

The Issues and Opportunities listed in this section were developed through discussions with stakeholders and residents; from the experiences of stakeholders and residents; through analysis of statistical data and information; and through review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities identified in the 2006 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. Each of the following issues and opportunities is addressed by corresponding policies in the “Community Policies” section.

### **I. Economic Development**

#### **Issues**

1. There is a lack of available diversified employment opportunities in Pierce County for the expanding labor force.
2. There is a limited skilled labor force for higher-paying job opportunities in the Pierce County area, perpetuating the outflow of daily commuters and the exodus of graduates.
3. The County has a limited amount of economic activity outside of a few individual industrial sectors and the governmental sector, which will eventually increase the tax burden on homeowners.
4. Business recruitment and expansion needs to continue to be successful.
5. Schools need to provide more diverse training that reflects recent changes in technology and the workforce, so that students can be more competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

#### **Opportunities**

1. Focus economic recruitment initiatives on business and industry matching the skill-sets of the local labor force and requiring minimal infrastructure needs.
2. Develop and promote a new industrial park area in order to attract new industry.
3. Encourage and collaborate on continued expansion of local job training programs.
4. Promote small business development.
5. The rail industry and port expansions provide expanding economic opportunities.

### **II. Housing**

#### **Issues**

1. Residential development in the unincorporated areas of Pierce County increases the investment required for public services and infrastructure expenditure (roads, schools, public safety), especially cluster mobile/manufactured home development for rental purposes.
2. The majority of housing is moderately priced; however, 30.9% are mobile homes, compared to 9.3% statewide and 6.4% nationally (2015 Census Bureau estimates). Depreciation of the value of these homes reduces the taxable revenue accrued from residential development and places financial burdens on local governments to provide the necessary services.
3. There is a lack of diversity in the housing supply, limiting options for low-to-moderate income and elderly households.
4. Various areas within the community are becoming blighted and are in need of revitalization and upgrade.

#### **Opportunities**

1. In order to reduce the number of septic tanks being installed, promote development in areas of the County that are in close proximity to municipalities where water and sewer are available.
2. Continue to update ordinances and codes to protect against insufficient and poor quality in residential development.
3. Explore establishment of an impact fee system and public/private shared cost proposals in preparation for future speculative housing development.
4. Coordinate efforts of Planning Commissions in ordinance compliance and development of compatible uses and design criteria in historic districts and neighborhoods.
5. Expansion of water and sewer infrastructure can be beneficial for economic development, and also for housing (by reducing insurance premiums, etc.).
6. Code enforcement, strong ordinances, and other tools can be used to reduce or eliminate blight.

### **III. Natural Resources**

#### **Issues**

1. Preservation of agricultural resources and open space/greenspace is needed.
2. Water quality in the watersheds is being degraded as development increases.
3. All groundwater recharge areas need to be protected.
4. Uniform enforcement of Environmental Ordinances by all jurisdictions is needed.
5. Unpaved roadways lack adequate drainage to assist in eliminating erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff.
6. Litter and illegal dumping are a problem, especially during floods when trash gets washed out of the woods and into the rivers.

#### **Opportunities**

1. Prioritize areas for additional greenspace acquisition/designation.
2. Focus on a Service Delivery Strategy agreement between the County and Cities to extend water and sewer services into areas where septic failures are suspected that will assist in protecting the area's groundwater recharge area and the watershed(s).
3. Protecting the principal groundwater recharge areas for the Miocene-Pliocene Aquifer, which is located in the southwest section of Pierce County. A large amount of development has occurred in and around this site, including the construction of the Waycross City sewage treatment plant.

### **IV. Cultural Resources**

#### **Issues**

1. A significant number of historic properties are not being improved and are unused and deteriorating.
2. Management plans and feasibility studies for historic properties are needed to determine potential uses and rehabilitation costs.

#### **Opportunities**

1. Create and/or participate in formal programs to promote cultural resources and increase cultural tourism.
2. Promote the use of state, federal, and local financial incentives for rehabilitating historic properties by private owners.
3. Promote the development of heritage education programs of the varied cultures which make up the County.

### **V. Community Facilities and Services**

#### **Issues**

1. All new development in the unincorporated areas of the County is anticipated to utilize septic tanks for on-site wastewater treatment, which increases the potential for tank failure and environmental degradation.
2. Emergency Services and Public Safety continue to require additional personnel, equipment, and improved facilities to meet current levels of need.
3. Many dirt roads within the County and a lack of adequate drainage.
4. Expanded government facilities are needed, including more court, jail, and office space.

#### **Opportunities**

1. Explore inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency opportunities for infrastructure expansion maximizing the efficiency of financial investment.
2. Evaluate current water distribution to determine and correct deficiencies in order to maximize water flow, pressure, and fire protection to future growth areas.
3. Evaluate current sewage collection systems to determine possible areas of infiltration and make needed corrections to maximize sewer capacity for future growth areas.
4. Continue local enforcement of state guidelines related to septic tank usage and drain field requirements.

5. Explore areas where impact fee requirements would facilitate expedited infrastructure improvements.
6. Secure property and assist in recreational facilities planning for centralized facilities.
7. Develop a strategic implementation plan for Emergency Services, Public Safety, and Code Enforcement which is based on anticipated growth trends and targeted to high growth areas.
8. A space study could be conducted to assess governments' needs.

## **VI. Transportation**

### **Issues**

1. Approximately 64% of all roadways throughout the County are unpaved.
2. Increase in vehicular traffic at 5-Points on Highway 84 due to the development of the Cotton Exchange strip mall.
3. There is a lack of public transit services, especially on the weekends.
4. The community needs more sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities.

### **Opportunities**

1. Work closely with Georgia DOT in developing plans for paving dirt roads in high density areas.
2. Develop a corridor congestion management plan with functional classifications to determine curve, cuts and access points along Highway 84 along with development and adoption of a right-of-way ordinance for future development in this area and all future commercial, industrial, and residential development.
3. Promote the existing transit system and seek additional funds in order to operate the system 7 days per week.
4. U.S. Highway 32 four-laning through Bristol will afford opportunities for development and make the area more easily accessible for truck traffic, especially for agricultural products.

## **VII. Intergovernmental Coordination**

### **Issues**

1. The Joint Development Authority is not currently active.
2. Possible future intergovernmental coordination with the City of Waycross and/or the City of Blackshear may be required in order for Pierce County to provide adequate infrastructure to accommodate the projected growth in the County

### **Opportunities**

1. Pierce County could join with other communities in the region to revive a regional economic development organization.

## **VIII. Land Use**

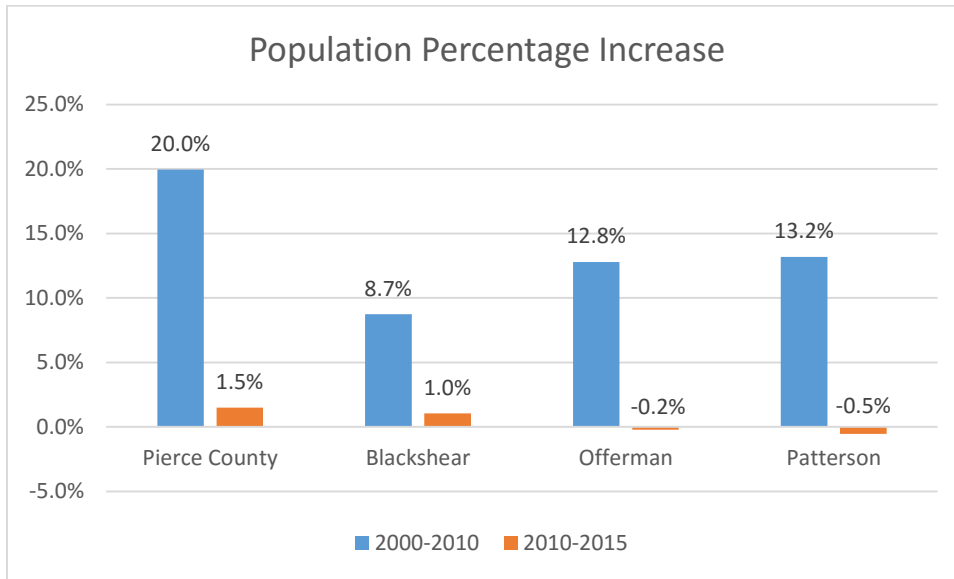
### **Issues**

1. New development is occurring within the unincorporated areas disconnected from existing municipalities, available infrastructure, and services.

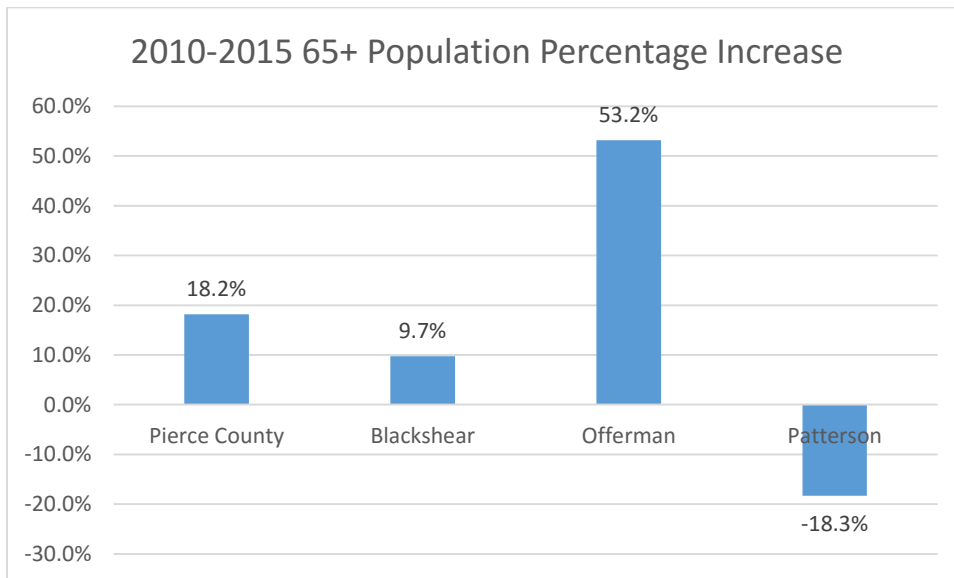
### **Opportunities**

1. Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment opportunities within existing municipalities, especially where in-fill development is feasible.
2. Reserve land for commercial/industrial growth on the Future Land Use map in areas with sufficient infrastructure and access to accommodate economic development initiatives.
3. Create public/private partnerships that identify financially feasible opportunities for preserving agricultural land and greenspace.
4. Encourage traditional neighborhood development.
5. Create greenways and pedestrian trails, as well as providing more sidewalks within the Cities and requiring developers to pave streets and provide sidewalks within new developments.

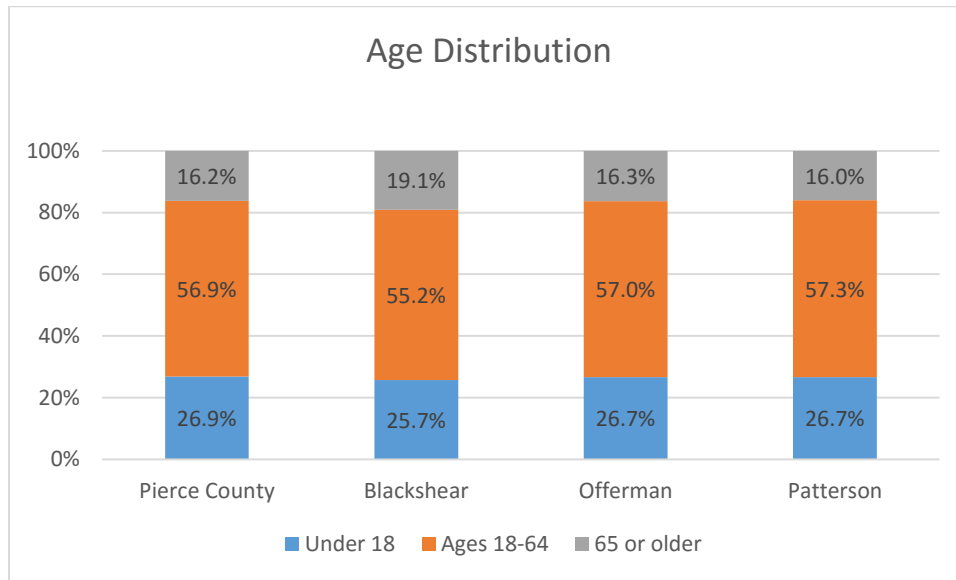
**3. Analysis of Data and Information**



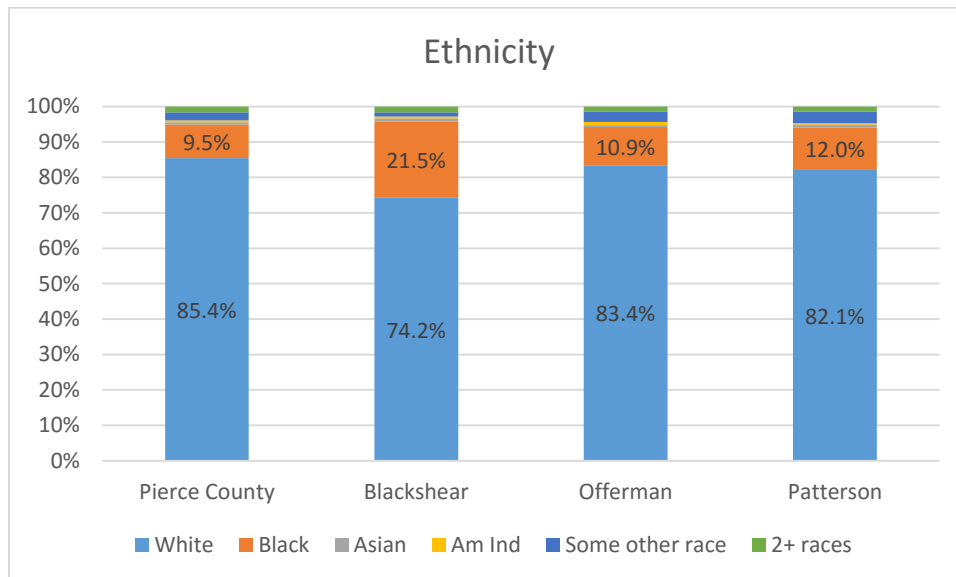
The 2015 population of Pierce County (the most recent figure currently available) is estimated at 18,934, a 1.5% increase since 2010. The 2015 population of Blackshear is estimated at 3,522, a 1.0% increase since 2010. The 2015 population of Offerman is 433, a decrease of 0.2% since 2010. The 2015 population of Patterson is 720, a 0.5% decrease since 2010. All jurisdictions gained population from 2000 to 2010 (20.0% for Pierce County, 8.7% for the City of Blackshear, and 13.2% for the City of Patterson).



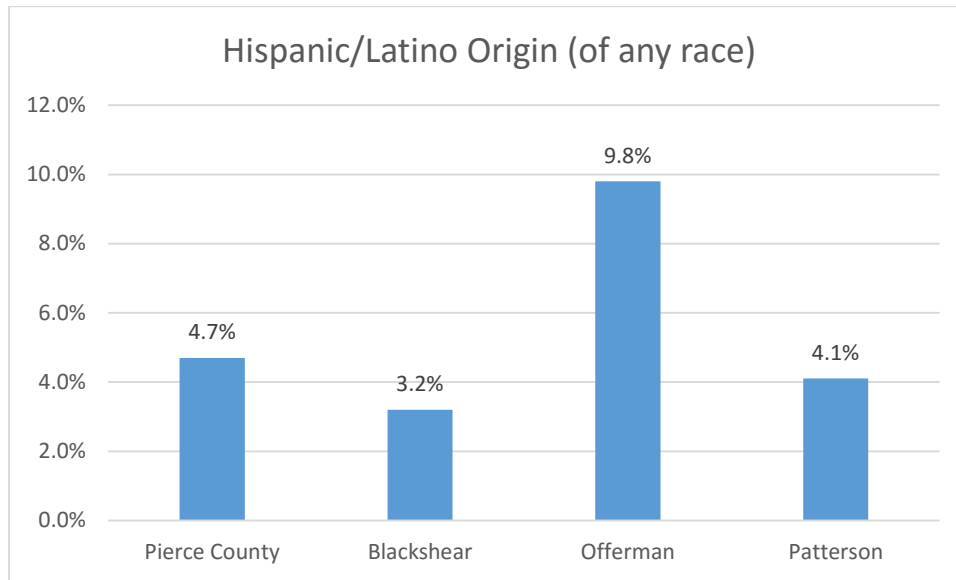
The percentage of the population aged 65 and older has increased in Pierce County and the City of Blackshear (18.2% and 9.7% respectively), and has decreased by 18.3% in the City of Patterson.



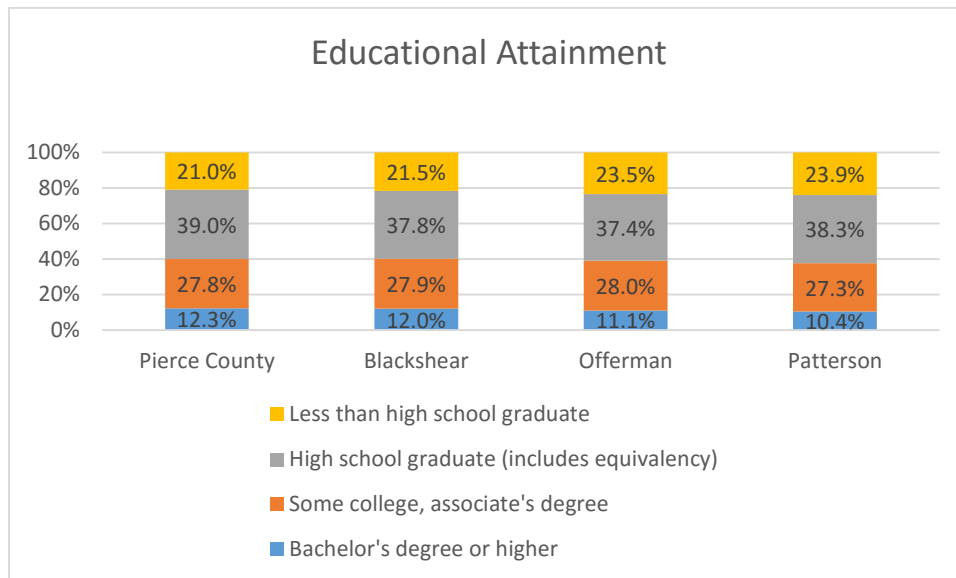
According to 2015 estimates, the age distribution in Pierce County is 16.2% over 65, 56.9% ages 20-64, and 26.9% under 20. In the City of Blackshear, the age distribution is 19.1% over 65, 55.2% ages 20-64, and 25.7% under 20. In the City of Patterson, the age distribution is 16.0% over 65, 57.3% ages 20-64, and 26.7% under 20. Pierce County's population is 50.9% female and 49.1% male, the City of Blackshear's population is 54.0% female and 46.0% male, and the City of Patterson's population is 52.1% female and 47.9% male.



The population of Pierce County is 85.4% White/Caucasian, 9.5% Black/African American, 2.3% some other race, 1.6% two or more races, 0.7% Asian, and 0.5% Native American. The City of Blackshear's population is 74.2% White/Caucasian, 21.5% Black/African American, 1.6% some other race, 1.2% two or more races, 0.9% Asian, and 0.6% Native American. The City of Patterson's population is 82.1% White/Caucasian, 12.0% Black/African American, 3.2% some other race, 1.5% two or more races, 0.8% Asian, and 0.4% Native American.



Pierce County’s population is 4.7% Hispanic/Latino, the City of Blackshear’s population is 3.2% Hispanic/Latino, and the City of Patterson’s population is 4.1% Hispanic/Latino.



Among persons aged 25 or older, in Pierce County, 21.0% have no high school diploma, 39.0% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 27.8% have an associate’s degree or some college, and 12.3% have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Among persons aged 25 or older in the City of Blackshear, 21.5% have no high school diploma, 37.8% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 27.9% have an associate’s degree or some college, and 12.0% have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Among persons aged 25 or older in the City of Patterson, 23.9% have no high school diploma, 38.3% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 27.3% have an associate’s degree or some college, and 10.4% have a bachelor’s or higher degree.

The median household income in Pierce County is \$41,685, the median household income in the City of Blackshear is \$31,239, and the median household income in the City of Patterson is \$27,394. An estimated 20.0% of Pierce County’s population, 28.8% of the City of Blackshear’s population, and 39.4% of the City of Patterson’s population live below the federal poverty level. In Pierce County, 26.7% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level, in the City of Blackshear 44.1% of persons under age

18 live below the poverty level, and in the City of Patterson 50.2% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level. Pierce County's estimated unemployment rate is 4.8%, the City of Blackshear's unemployment rate is 4.6%, and the City of Patterson's unemployment rate is 5.7%. Among adults aged 16 and older, the rate of labor force participation is 54.8% in Pierce County, 39.8% in the City of Blackshear, and 53.1% in the City of Patterson.

*Data source: U.S. Census Bureau ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))*



#### 4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has crafted a series of objectives dealing with a broad range of issues that concern local governments. The objectives, which are listed below, are only recommendations, but provide local governments with a tool to guide them in the assessment of their needs and opportunities and in the development of their implementation activities. If they are used as such a tool by many of the local governments in their planning efforts, these objectives also have the potential to result in consistent planning projects and goals, which may translate into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents.

##### 1. Economic Prosperity

Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include: job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; and prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Business Incubator** - Develop a business incubator to give local entrepreneurs a useful location and other assistance to support a fledgling business.
- **Downtown Program** - Actively support and participate in programs that promote healthy business downtown such as Downtown Development Authorities, Better Hometown, and MainStreet.

##### 2. Resource Management

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Riparian Buffers** - Adopt a riparian buffer ordinance, with a minimum buffer of 25', to protect the banks of streams and rivers from development. These buffers help protect water quality by slowing and filtering stormwater runoff as it flows toward the stream.

##### 3. Efficient Land Use

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Adaptive Reuse** - Create incentives such as tax breaks, code changes or other regulatory tools to encourage property owners to rehabilitate underutilized or vacant structures so that they can be put to new uses.
- **Infill Development Program** - Develop a comprehensive strategy for encouraging infill development in particular areas of the community, while also regulating this development to ensure protection of quality of life in affected neighborhoods. This strategy should include a) development incentives, improvements to public facilities and services, and streamlined regulations to encourage infill development; b) guidelines for appropriate design, density and location of new infill projects.
- **Urban Redevelopment Plan** - Establish an urban redevelopment plan (and appoint an authority to implement this plan) for areas with high concentrations of underutilized buildings and infrastructure.

##### 4. Local Preparedness

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to

opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Comprehensive Planning** - Develop a comprehensive plan that truly represents what your community wants to achieve. To be truly representative of the community, this plan must be prepared with substantial participation by community residents. To ensure that the plan helps your community achieve its goals, develop mechanisms or procedures which ensure that decisions made by local leadership are consistent with your comprehensive plan.

## 5. Sense of Place

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Code Enforcement** - Utilize code enforcement as a tool to require property owners to properly maintain their residential units and thereby prevent neighborhood blight and foreclosed properties.

## 6. Regional Cooperation

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Regional Economic Development Efforts** - Join and participate in joint development authorities or other regional economic development organizations to work together to market regional assets to potential industry, coordinate recruitment efforts, etc..

## 7. Housing Options

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Georgia Initiative for Community Housing** - Participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing program. This program helps communities establish an effective local program and strategy for providing affordable housing in the community.
- **Land Bank** - Establish a local land bank empowered to acquire and assemble available properties in areas of the community in need of redevelopment, then offer these properties to private developers as sites for new development of affordable or infill housing. Land banking is a proven strategy for effective revitalization of declining areas of the community.

## 8. Transportation Options

Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Access Control Measures** - Employ access control measures to provide reasonable access to developments, while preserving the safe flow of traffic on an arterial or major collector, often in a strip mall environment. Techniques like managing where and how approaches or signals are

allowed, use of medians and creation of turn lanes improve the driving atmosphere while also making movement easier and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists

- **Bicycle Facilities** - Ensure safe, adequate and well-designed facilities are provided for bicyclists, including pavement markings, signage, and intersection crossings.
- **Complete Streets** - Adopt a "Complete Streets" philosophy in designing and building local streets that specifies that "users" of a street includes pedestrians, bicyclists and public transportation passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles. This approach should be applied to both new and retrofit projects, and involves use of sidewalks, street trees, etc.

### 9. Educational Opportunities

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Work Ready Program** - Participate in the Georgia Work Ready program, which helps citizens build their work skills, certify their preparedness for particular types of jobs, and match workers with employers looking for their particular skills.
- **Childhood Development Programs** - Access the services of state and federal organizations and programs that helps children achieve literacy, complete school, and be prepared to work. These include Head Start, Communities in Schools and Americorps' Great Future Kids

### 10. Community Health

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

Best Practices recommended for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson:

- **Transportation to Services** - Provide public transportation options to local community health facilities. If public transportation isn't available in your area, consider instituting a DOT 5311 on-demand transit system or contact your regional commission about their RHST program.

## **5. Community Policies**

The following policies, numbered to align with the Community Goals, were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide a qualitative guidance to address the Issues and Opportunities identified in this Plan, and to provide a framework for the development of the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program then addresses the Issues and Opportunities through specific projects, for each of which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.

### **I. Economic Development**

#### ***1. There is a lack of available diversified employment opportunities in Pierce County for the expanding labor force.***

Policies:

1. We will carefully evaluate which industries, sectors, and clusters are the most compatible with the County and develop a program to attract them.
2. We will become more aggressive in pursuing an employment base of regional-scale employers that will attract a full range of complementary jobs to Pierce County.
3. We will consider the employment needs and skill levels of our existing population in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
4. We will aggressively pursue an employment base of regional scale employers that will attract a full range of complementary jobs for pierce County

#### ***2. There is a limited skilled labor force for higher-paying job opportunities in the Pierce County Area, perpetuating the outflow of daily commuters and the exodus of graduates.***

Policies:

1. We will focus economic recruitment initiatives on business and industry matching the skill-sets of the local labor force and requiring minimal infrastructure needs; and also encourage and collaborate on continued expansion of local job training programs.
2. We will make efforts to expand continuing education opportunities.

#### ***3. The County has a limited amount of economic activity outside of a few individual industrial sectors and the governmental sector, which will eventually increase the tax burden on homeowners.***

Policies:

1. We will promote the enhancement of the quality of the built and natural environment of Pierce County in order to attract new residents to the area, which could in turn help in attracting new industries, which follow population growth to the area.

#### ***4. Business recruitment and expansion needs to continue to be successful.***

Policies:

1. We will develop and promote the existing industrial park area in order to attract new industry.
2. We will carefully consider costs as well as benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.
3. We will encourage reinvestment and redevelopment opportunities within existing municipalities, especially where in-fill development is feasible.
4. Land will be reserved for commercial/industrial growth in areas with sufficient infrastructure and access to accommodate economic development initiatives.

#### ***5. Schools need to provide more diverse training that reflects recent changes in technology and the workforce, so that students can be more competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.***

Policies:

1. Diversification and modernization of training in schools should be encouraged.

### **II. Housing**

#### ***1. Residential development in the unincorporated areas of Pierce County increases the investment required for public services and infrastructure expenditure (roads, schools, public safety), especially cluster mobile/manufactured home development for rental purposes.***

Policies:

1. We will promote development in areas of the County that are in close proximity to municipalities where water and sewer are available to reduce the number of septic tanks being installed within the County.
2. We will explore establishment of an impact fee system and public/private shared costs proposals in preparation for future speculative housing development.

**2. The majority of housing is moderately priced; however, 30.9% are mobile homes, compared to 9.3% statewide and 6.4% nationally (2015 Census Bureau estimates). Depreciation of the value of these homes reduces the taxable revenue accrued from residential development and places financial burdens on local governments to provide the necessary services.**

Policies:

1. We will evaluate the tax structure on mobile/manufactured homes and try to structure it in such a way that it becomes more equitable for all Pierce County taxpayers.
2. We will continue to update ordinances and codes to protect against insufficient and poor quality in residential development.

**3. There is a lack of diversity in the housing supply, limiting options for low-to-moderate income and elderly households.**

Policies:

1. We will support dispersion of assisted housing throughout the community in order to diversify neighborhoods and eliminate pockets of poverty.
2. We will encourage housing policies, choices, and patterns that move people upward on the housing ladder from dependence to independence (home-ownership).
3. We will participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH).
4. We will continue to work with public/private institutions to increase affordable standard housing opportunities for low and moderate income families throughout Pierce County.

**4. Various areas within the community are becoming blighted and are in need of revitalization and upgrade.**

Policies:

1. We will coordinate efforts of Planning Commissions in ordinance compliance and development of compatible uses and design criteria in historic districts and neighborhoods.
2. We will promote redevelopment efforts in declining areas of the City of Blackshear, where housing conditions are worsening due to low rate of homeownership and neglect of property maintenance. The Cities of Blackshear and Patterson will develop a Redevelopment Plan for these areas in order to obtain possible funding for housing opportunities to attract some of the projected growth, thus ensuring neighborhoods that are more stable with a large percentage of owner-occupied housing.
3. We will continue to eliminate blight areas throughout the County through condemnation, demolition, and rehabilitation projects.
4. We will promote homeownership to low and moderate income families.
5. Traditional Neighborhood Development should be encouraged.

**III. Natural Resources**

**1. Preservation of agricultural resources and open space/greenspace is needed.**

Policies:

1. We will prioritize areas for additional greenspace acquisition/designation.
2. We will promote the use of conservation easements by land owners.
3. We will continue to create public/private partnerships that identify financially feasible opportunities for preserving agricultural land and greenspace.

**2. Water quality in the watersheds is being degraded as development increases.**

Policies:

1. We will focus on a Service Delivery Strategy agreement between the County and Cities to extend water and sewer services into areas where septic failures are suspected that will assist in protecting the area's groundwater recharge area and the watershed(s).

2. We will promote subdivision design that incorporates significant amounts of open space.

**3. All groundwater recharge areas need to be protected.**

Policies:

1. We will protect the principal groundwater recharge areas for the Miocene-Pliocene Aquifer, which is located in the southwest section of Pierce County, through the promotion and development of infrastructure networks to steer new development away from this sensitive natural resource.
2. We will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations in order to protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment.

**4. Uniform enforcement of Environmental Ordinances by all jurisdictions is needed.**

Policies:

1. We will make every effort to comply with the Rules of the Environmental Planning Criteria through:
  - (a) Adoption of a Groundwater Recharge Area protection ordinance consistent with the Environmental Planning Criteria to ensure more control over new development;
  - (b) Adoption of a River Corridor Protection ordinance to designate the Little Satilla River and the Satilla River as protected rivers;
  - (c) Adoption of a Water Supply Watershed Protection ordinance consistent with Georgia's Environmental Planning Criteria limiting imperviousness within the watershed to no less than 25 percent.
2. Best Management Practices will be enforced for any land disturbance activities associated with new development, including tree harvesting and utility construction.
3. The extension of public utilities in environmentally sensitive areas will be discouraged.

**5. Unpaved roadways lack adequate drainage to assist in minimizing erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff.**

Policies:

1. We will make efforts to have set-asides for road paving and drainage projects and seek funds through the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to assist with these efforts.

**6. Litter and illegal dumping are a problem, especially during floods when trash gets washed out of the woods and into the rivers.**

Policies:

1. Litter laws and illegal dumping laws will be enforced.
2. Proper tire disposal will be encouraged
3. We will explore policies and solutions for litter prevention.

**IV. Cultural Resources**

**1. A significant number of historic properties are not being improved and are unused and deteriorating.**

Policies:

1. We will make efforts to develop management plans and feasibility studies for historic properties in order to determine potential uses and rehabilitation costs.
2. Promote the use of state, federal, and local financial incentives for rehabilitating historic properties by private owners.
3. Continue to promote all financial incentives for the rehabilitation of historic properties by private owners, with an emphasis on the downtown areas of Blackshear and Patterson.
4. We will coordinate all efforts in ordinance compliance and development of compatible uses and design criteria in historic districts and neighborhoods.
5. The development of Downtown Blackshear and Downtown Patterson will be continually encouraged as vibrant centers of the two communities.
6. We will encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the character of the region.

**2. Management plans and feasibility studies for historic properties are needed to determine potential uses and rehabilitation costs.**

Policies:

1. We will develop avenues through the SGRC and others to develop an inventory of the cultural resources throughout Pierce County, which includes the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson.
2. We will create and/or participate in formal programs to promote cultural resources and increase cultural tourism.
3. We will promote the development of heritage education programs of the varied cultures which make up the County.

**V. Community Facilities and Services**

**1. All new development in the unincorporated areas of the County is anticipated to utilize septic tanks for on-site wastewater treatment, which increases the potential for tank failure and environmental degradation.**

Policies:

1. We will continue local enforcement of state guidelines related to septic tank usage and drain field requirements.
2. Explore inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency opportunities for infrastructure expansion, maximizing the efficiency of financial investment.
3. Evaluate current water distribution to determine and correct deficiencies in order to maximize water flow, pressure, and fire protection to future growth areas.
4. Evaluate current sewage collection systems to determine possible areas of infiltration and make needed corrections to maximize sewer capacity for future growth areas.
5. We will explore areas where impact fee requirements would expedite infrastructure improvements.

**2. Emergency Services and Public Safety continue to require additional personnel, equipment, and improved facilities to meet current levels of need.**

Policies:

1. We will develop a strategic implementation plan for Emergency Services, Public Safety, and Code Enforcement, based on anticipated growth trends and targeted to high-growth areas.

**3. Many dirt roads within the County lack adequate drainage.**

Policies:

1. Work closely with Georgia DOT and DCA in developing plans for paving roads in high density areas.
2. Encourage the use of Best Management Practices for dirt roads in order to reduce erosion and runoff.

**4. Expanded government facilities are needed, including more court, jail, and office space.**

Policies:

1. A space needs study should be conducted.
2. We will continue to explore inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency opportunities for infrastructure expansion, maximizing the efficiency of financial investments.

**VI. Transportation**

**1. Approximately 64% of all roadways throughout the County are unpaved.**

Policies:

1. Work closely with Georgia DOT and DCA in developing plans for paving dirt roads, especially in high density areas.

**2. Increase in vehicular traffic at 5-Points on Highway 84 due to the development of the Cotton Exchange strip mall.**

Policies:

1. Develop a corridor congestion management plan with functional classifications to determine curve, cuts and access points along Highway 84 along with development and adoption of a right-

of-way ordinance for future development in this area and all future commercial, industrial, and residential development.

2. The possibility of roundabouts should be investigated, as well as overpasses and underpasses (especially for crossing railroad tracks).

**3. *There is a lack of public transit services, especially on the weekends.***

Policies:

1. Promote the existing transit system and seek additional funds in order to operate the system 7 days per week.

**4. *The community needs more sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities.***

Policies:

1. Create greenways and pedestrian trails, as well as providing more sidewalks within the Cities and requiring developers to pave streets and provide sidewalks within new developments.

**VII. Intergovernmental Coordination**

**1. *The Joint Development Authority is not currently active.***

Policies:

1. Joint coordinated efforts with surrounding counties for economic development should be encouraged.

**2. *Possible future intergovernmental coordination with the City of Waycross and/or the City of Blackshear may be required in order for Pierce County to provide adequate infrastructure to accommodate the projected growth in the County.***

Policies:

1. Improved intergovernmental coordination should be encouraged.
2. Local governments will continue to work with all local agencies to have a better understanding of state, federal and local laws, and rules and regulations that govern all agencies.
3. We will seek opportunities to share services and facilities with other neighboring jurisdictions when mutually beneficial.
4. Cooperative planning between the local government and local school board will be encouraged, in regard to the appropriate location of school facilities.
5. Efforts will be made to improve communication/collaboration between local governments and all local authorities, constitutional officers, and boards, with regard to education and the needs of the community.

**VIII. Land Use**

**1. *New development is occurring within the unincorporated areas disconnected from existing municipalities, available infrastructure, and services.***

Policies:

1. Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment opportunities within existing municipalities, especially where in-fill development is feasible.
2. Reserve land for commercial/industrial growth on the Future Land Use map in areas with sufficient infrastructure and access to accommodate economic development initiatives.
3. Create public/private partnerships that identify financially feasible opportunities for preserving agricultural land, greenspace (including both active and passive recreational), and historic preservation.
4. We will encourage traditional neighborhood development.
5. We will encourage new development to enhance the community's character and sense of place.
6. We will consider separating incompatible land uses with a compatible land use.
7. New growth and development will be guided to areas with existing public infrastructure.
8. Pierce County/Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Joint Planning Commission will be continually supported.



## 6. Community Work Program

### Report Of Accomplishments: Pierce County 5-Year Short-Term Work Program (2011 - 2015)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
<b>NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES</b>									
Continue to work towards the establishment of an Historic District and the creation of an Historic Resources Commission.	Staff time	Local and RC	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to establish historic resources protection ordinances within the County.	\$3,500	Local	County	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to work on the National Register nomination process for the downtown areas of Blackshear and Patterson.	Staff time	Local and DDA	Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Identify appropriate areas and funding sources for fee simple acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.	\$5,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing		x			
Enforce Best Management Practices (BMP) for any land disturbance activities associated with new development, including tree harvesting and utility construction.	Staff time	Local and DNR	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Natural Resources Issue 4, Policy 2.	x	x	x	x	x
Enforce large-lot zoning (minimum 10-acre lots) to preserve the economic function of agriculture, livestock and forestry in Pierce County.	n/a	Local	County	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluate the benefits and costs of employing a conservation subdivision ordinance consistent with policy.	n/a	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing		x			
Discourage the extension of public utilities in environmentally sensitive areas.	\$1,500	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Natural Resources Issue 4, Policy 3.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to enforce the illegal dumping ordinance.	Staff time	Local	County	Complete; continued as Natural Resources Issue 6, Policy 1.	x	x	x	x	x
Allow limited land splits for heirs.	n/a	Local	County	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluate ways to prioritize areas for additional greenspace acquisition/design.	n/a	Local	County	Ongoing	x	x			

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Continue to promote all financial incentives for the rehabilitation of historic properties by private owners, with an emphasis on the downtown areas of Blackshear and Patterson.	n/a	Local	County	Complete; continued as Cultural Resources Issue 1, Policy 3.	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the use of conservation easements by land owners.	Staff time	Local	County	Complete; continued as Natural Resources Issue 1, Policy 2.	x	x	x	x	x
Seek funding for the development of confederate prison war sites within Pierce County as local historical tourist areas.	Staff time	DNR	County	Ongoing			x		
Coordinate all efforts in ordinance compliance and development of compatible uses and design criteria in historic districts and neighborhoods.	\$2,500 and staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Cultural Resources Issue 1, Policy 4.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Continue to participate in the IDBA and Chamber of Commerce to promote economic development, and develop programs to market the area.	\$85,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue County-wide recruiting efforts to attract appropriate employers.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue the business analysis of the local economy composition and industry contribution of the Cities and the County.	Staff time	Local	Authority, County, Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Explore the feasibility of adopting capital improvement programs in each community.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing		x			
Evaluate various financing methods for new infrastructure.	\$2,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing		x	x		
Seek funding avenues that will assist the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson to recruit local and outside entrepreneurs to expand or locate in the downtown area.	n/a	County	EIP, RLF, DDF	Ongoing under the Cities' work programs	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the County's recently achieved Work Ready status to all potential new businesses and industries.	\$2,500 and staff time	Local	County/Cities/IDBA and Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Establish an Enterprise Zone or Opportunity Zone within the Cities to encourage redevelopment and infill.	\$10,000	Local and RC	Cities	Ongoing			x	x	

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment opportunities within existing municipalities, especially where in-fill development is feasible.	n/a	Local	Cities	Complete; continued as Economic Development Issue 4, Policy 3.	x	x	x	x	x
Reserve land for commercial/industrial growth in areas with sufficient infrastructure and access to accommodate economic development initiatives.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Economic Development Issue 4, Policy 4.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>HOUSING</b>									
Continue to work with public/private institutions to increase affordable standard housing opportunities for low and moderate income families throughout Pierce County.	n/a	CDBG/CHIP / USDA	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Housing Issue 3, Policy 4.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to eliminate blight areas throughout the County through condemnation, demolition, and rehabilitation projects.	n/a	Local/CDBG	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Housing Issue 4, Policy 3.	x	x	x	x	x
Establish a redevelopment strategy for identified declining areas in the City of Blackshear, and develop a Redevelopment Plan.	\$15,000	Local	Blackshear	Ongoing		x	x		
Seek state and federal funding for redevelopment in declining areas that will facilitate the provision of affordable housing to low and moderate income families.	n/a	USDA/CHIP /CDBG	Blackshear	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Promote homeownership to low and moderate income families.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Housing Issue 4, Policy 4.	x	x	x	x	x
Participate in the state's Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program.	\$5,000	Local and DCA	County and Cities	Ongoing			x	x	x
<b>LAND USE</b>									
Continue working with the RC to update existing zoning ordinances and maps that will be administered through the Joint Planning Commission.	\$20,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue working on ordinances of environmentally sensitive areas.	n/a	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to create public/private partnerships that identify financially feasible opportunities for preserving agricultural land and greenspace.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Natural Resources Issue 1, Policy 3.	x	x	x	x	x
Encourage traditional neighborhood development.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Housing Issue 4, Policy 5.	x	x	x	x	x

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Encourage the development of greenways, pedestrian trails, and sidewalks within the Cities.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing; continued as specific projects in the new work programs.	x	x	x	x	x
Require developers to pave streets and provide sidewalks within all new development.	\$2,500 and staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Transportation Issue 4, Policy 1 as well as specific projects in the new work programs.	x	x	x	x	x
Encourage new development to enhance the community's character and sense of place.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Land Use Issue 1, Policy 5.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to encourage the development of downtown as a vibrant center of the community.	Staff time	Local	Cities	Complete; continued as Cultural Resources Issue 1, Policy 5.	x	x	x	x	x
Access and review successful land planning and development concepts from other communities.	\$3,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Update the public on new zoning laws and ordinances through Public Awareness measures.	\$5,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Consider separating incompatible land uses with a compatible land use.	n/a	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Land Use Issue 1, Policy 6.		x			
Prepare a "right to farm" ordinance.	\$5,000	Local	County	Ongoing		x	x		
Consider requiring traffic studies for new development in known congested areas.	\$10,000	Local/DOT	County and Cities	Ongoing		x			
Promote sub-division design that incorporates significant amounts of open space.	Staff time	Local	County	Complete; continued as Natural Resources Issue 2, Policy 2.	x	x	x	x	x
Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the character of the region.	Staff time	Local	County	Complete; continued as Cultural Resources Issue 1, Policy 6.	x	x	x	x	x
Develop ordinances that will encourage infill and cluster development.	\$7,500	Local	County	Ongoing		x	x	x	

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Continue to update ordinances and codes to protect against insufficient and poor quality housing.	Staff time	Local	County	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to guide new growth/development to areas with existing public infrastructure.	Staff time	Local	County	Complete; continued as Land Use Issue 1, Policy 7.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Pierce County/Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Joint Planning Commission.	\$24,500	Local	County	Complete; continued as Land Use Issue 1, Policy 8.	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluate the benefits and costs of prohibiting junkyards and equipment storage in areas that would be visible from the highway.	Staff time	Local	County	Ongoing		x			
Evaluate the benefits and costs of developing ordinances to guide the placement of mobile home parks and single family manufacture homes in the County and Cities.	n/a	Local	County	Ongoing			x		
Develop and adopt a rights-of-way ordinance for future development, including commercial, industrial and residential.	\$12,500	Local/DOT	County and Cities	Ongoing				x	x
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>									
Continue remodeling vacant public buildings for community centers and public recreational use, as feasible.	n/a	Local/CDBG/DNR	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support and improve recreational programs and facilities within the County.	\$100,000	Local/LDF/DNR	County and Blackshear	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support public infrastructure projects that improve drainage and transportation systems in Pierce County.	n/a	Local/DOT/CDBG	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to update the Blackshear/Pierce County/Patterson Volunteer Fire Department Master Plans, as needed.	\$7,500	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to upgrade fire equipment in the Pierce County, Blackshear, Patterson and Offerman Volunteer Fire Department, as needed.	\$650,000	Local/State/Federal	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to study the feasibility of the consolidation of law enforcement and other services in Pierce County.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support all cultural activities and festivals in the Cities and County.	\$75,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Work with GA DOT and others in developing a corridor congestion management plan.	\$25,000	Local/DOT	County and Blackshear	Ongoing		x	x	x	
Organize a system for upgrading and modifying road design in order to increase public safety.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Work toward improving traffic flow design and operations, specifically in congested areas.	n/a	Local/DOT	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the existing rural transit system and seek additional funds in order to operate the system 7-days per week.	\$5,000	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Provide assistance to maintain the drainage canals in the Cities of Blackshear, Patterson, and Offerman.	n/a	Local/DOT/CDBG	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to explore inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency opportunities for infrastructure expansion, maximizing the efficiency of financial investments.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Community Facilities Issue 4, Policy 2.	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluate current water distribution and sewage collection systems, determine and correct deficiencies, and maximize capacity for future growth areas.	Staff time	Local	Cities	Ongoing		x	x	x	
Explore areas where impact fee requirements would expedite infrastructure improvements.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Ongoing		x			
Develop plans for paving dirt roads in high density areas.	n/a	Local/DOT/CDBG	County and Cities	Ongoing		x	x		
Continue local enforcement of state guidelines related to septic tank usage and drain field requirements.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Community Facilities Issue 1, Policy 1.	x	x	x	x	x
Work with the DOT to establish a school zone at County Farm Road and Highway 84.	\$5,000	DOT	County and BOE	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Seek funding for the centralizing of all recreational fields and facilities to maximize efficiency and convenience for all residents.	Staff time	Local/DNR/CDBG	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to renovate vacant existing schools for reuse.	n/a	Local	BOE	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Develop strong pedestrian/bicycle connections to encourage residents to walk/bike to work, shop, and other designations in the community.	\$60,000	Local/DOT	County and Cities	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>									
Continue to work with all local agencies to have a better understanding of state, federal and local laws, and rules and regulations that govern all agencies.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Intergovernmental Coordination Issue 2, Policy 2.	x	x	x	x	x
Seek opportunities to share services and facilities with other neighboring jurisdictions when mutually beneficial.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Intergovernmental Coordination Issue 2, Policy 3.	x	x	x	x	x
Encourage cooperative planning between the local government and local school board in regard to the appropriate location of school facilities.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	Complete; continued as Intergovernmental Coordination Issue 2, Policy 4.	x	x	x	x	x
Improve communication/collaboration between local governments and Board of Education on education information and needs of the community.	Staff time	Local, BOE	County, Cities and BOE	Complete; continued as Intergovernmental Coordination Issue 2, Policy 5.	x	x	x	x	x

**Pierce County 5-Year Community Work Program Update**  
(2018-2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Develop programs to market the area and promote economic development in cooperation with the IDBA and Chamber of Commerce.	\$200,000	Local	County/Cities/IDBA and Chamber of Commerce	1	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct County-wide recruiting efforts to attract appropriate employers.	Staff time	Local	County/Cities/IDBA and Chamber of Commerce	1	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct business analysis of the local economy composition and industry contribution of the Cities and the County.	Staff time	Local	County/Cities/IDBA and Chamber of Commerce	1	x	x			
Conduct a program that promotes the County's Work Ready status to all potential new businesses and industries.	\$2,500 and staff time	Local	County/Cities/IDBA and Chamber of Commerce	1	x	x			
Conduct and support cultural activities and festivals in the Cities and County.	\$75,000	Local	County and Cities	1	x	x	x	x	x
<b>HOUSING</b>									
Participate in the state's Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program.	\$5,000	Local and DCA	County and Cities	2	x	x	x	x	x
Update ordinances and codes to protect against insufficient and poor quality housing.	Staff time	Local	County	2	x	x	x	x	x
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Identify appropriate areas and funding sources for fee simple acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.	\$5,000	Local	County and Cities	3	x	x			
Evaluate ways to prioritize areas for additional greenspace acquisition/design.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	3	x	x	x		
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Establish an Historic District and create a Historic Resources Commission.	Staff time	Local and RC	County and Cities	4	x	x			



Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Establish historic resources protection ordinances within the County.	\$3,500	Local	County	4	x	x	x		
Develop confederate prison war sites within Pierce County as local historical tourist areas.	Staff time	Grants	County	4	x	x	x	x	x
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>									
Evaluate the feasibility of adopting capital improvement programs in each community.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	5	x	x	x		
Evaluate financing methods for new infrastructure.	\$2,000	Local	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	
Remodel vacant public buildings for community centers and public recreational use, as feasible.	\$1 million	Local, CDBG, DNR, other grants	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	x
Implement improved recreational programs and facilities within the County.	\$2.5 million	Local, State, Federal, Grants, DCA, Local Development Funds (LDF)	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	x
Implement public infrastructure projects that improve drainage and transportation systems, including maintaining and rehabilitating drainage canals in the County and all Cities.	\$6 million	Local, GDOT, CDBG, other grants	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	x
Update the Blackshear/Pierce County/Patterson Volunteer Fire Department Master Plans, and conduct an ISO study.	\$20,000	Local	County and Cities	5		x	x	x	x
Upgrade fire equipment in the Pierce County, Blackshear, Patterson and Offerman Volunteer Fire Department, as needed.	\$1,000,000	Local/State/Federal	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	x
Explore areas where impact fee requirements would expedite infrastructure improvements.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	x
Construct new jail with 200-225 person capacity	\$14 million	Local/State/Federal/Grants	County	5		x	x	x	x

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Centralize all recreational fields and facilities to maximize efficiency and convenience for all residents.	\$2.5 million	Local/DNR/CDBG	County and Cities	5	x	x	x	x	x
Renovate vacant existing schools for reuse.	\$19 million	Local	BOE	5	x	x	x	x	x
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>									
Conduct traffic studies for new development in known congested areas.	\$10,000 per intersection	Local, GDOT	County and Cities	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
Work with GA DOT and others in developing a corridor congestion management plan.	\$25,000	Local, GDOT	County and Blackshear	5, 6		x	x	x	
Organize a system for upgrading and modifying road design in order to increase public safety.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
Implement measures to improve traffic flow design and operations, specifically in congested areas.	\$5 million	Local, GDOT, Grants	County and Cities	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the existing rural transit system and seek additional funds in order to operate the system 7 days per week.	\$5,000	Local	County and Cities	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
Pave 75 miles of dirt roads	\$22.5 million	Local, State, Federal	County and Cities	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
Work with the DOT to establish a school zone at County Farm Road and Highway 84.	\$5,000	GDOT	County and BOE	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
Develop strong pedestrian/bicycle connections to encourage residents to walk/bike to work, shop, and other designations in the community.	\$60,000	Local, GDOT, Grants	County and Cities	5, 6	x	x	x	x	x
<b>LAND USE</b>									
Adopt large-lot zoning (minimum 10-acre lots) to preserve the economic function of agriculture, livestock and forestry in Pierce County.	Staff time	Local	County	8	x	x			

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Evaluate the benefits and costs of employing a conservation subdivision ordinance consistent with policy.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	3, 8	x	x			
Adopt regulations allowing limited land splits for heirs.	Staff time	Local	County	8	x	x	x		
Update existing zoning ordinances and maps that will be administered through the Joint Planning Commission.	\$50,000	Local	County and Cities	8	x	x			
Adopt ordinances to protect environmentally sensitive areas.	Staff time	Local	County and Cities	8	x	x	x	x	x
Access and review successful land planning and development concepts from other communities.	\$3,000	Local	County and Cities	8	x	x	x	x	x
Update the public on new zoning laws and ordinances through Public Awareness measures.	\$5,000	Local	County and Cities	8	x	x	x	x	x
Adopt a "right to farm" ordinance.	\$5,000	Local	County	8	x				
Develop ordinances that will encourage infill and cluster development.	\$7,500	Local	County	8	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluate the benefits and costs of prohibiting junkyards and equipment storage in areas that would be visible from the highway.	Staff time	Local	County	8	x	x	x		
Evaluate the benefits and costs of developing ordinances to guide the placement of mobile home parks and single family manufactured homes in the County and Cities.	Staff time	Local	County	2, 8	x	x	x	x	x
Develop and adopt a rights-of-way ordinance for future development, including commercial, industrial and residential.	\$12,500	Local/DOT	County and Cities	8	x	x	x	x	x
Extend Money Hole Rd to Hwy 121	\$10 million	Local/GDOT	County	8		x	x	x	x
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>									
(none identified)									

**City of Blackshear 5-Year Community Work Program Update**  
(2018-2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Conduct a program to recruit local and outside entrepreneurs to expand or locate in downtown Blackshear.	Staff time	Local governments, grants	City of Blackshear, Main Street, Chamber of Commerce, IDBA	1	x	x	x	x	x
Establish an Enterprise Zone or Opportunity Zone within the City to encourage redevelopment and infill.	\$10,000	Local, RC	City of Blackshear	1	x	x	x		
<b>HOUSING</b>									
Establish a redevelopment strategy for identified declining areas in the City of Blackshear, and develop a Redevelopment Plan.	\$15,000	Local	City of Blackshear	2	x	x	x	x	x
Redevelop housing in declining areas that will facilitate the provision of affordable housing to low and moderate income families.	\$100,000	USDA/CHIP/CDBG	City of Blackshear	2	x	x	x	x	x
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Nominate Downtown Blackshear for the National Register of Historic Places.	Staff time	Local and DDA	City of Blackshear	4	x				
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>									
Evaluate current water distribution and sewage collection systems, determine and correct deficiencies (including new well/water tower), and maximize capacity for future growth areas.	\$5 million	Local, USDA, CDBG, other grants/loans	City of Blackshear	5	x	x	x	x	x
Construct public safety building	\$3 million	Local, grants, loans	City of Blackshear	5		x	x	x	
Purchase police cars	\$150,000	Local, grants, loans	City of Blackshear	5	x		x		x
Renovate the old train depot	\$500,000	Local, grants	City of Blackshear	5		x	x	x	
Purchase 25 acres for solid waste facility / yard debris disposal site	\$150,000	Local, grants	City of Blackshear	5	x	x	x	x	

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Construct wastewater treatment plant	\$7 million	Local, USDA, CDBG, other grants/loans	City of Blackshear	5	x	x			
Install solar panels for wastewater treatment plant	\$2.5 million	Local, grants	City of Blackshear	5	x	x			
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>									
Repave and resurface streets	\$150,000 per year	Local, LMIG	City of Blackshear	6	x	x	x	x	x
Repair sidewalks	\$500,000	Local, SPLOST	City of Blackshear	6	x	x	x	x	x

**City of Patterson 5-Year Community Work Program Update**  
(2018-2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Conduct a program to recruit local and outside entrepreneurs to expand or locate in downtown Patterson.	Staff time	Local governments, grants	City of Patterson, Main Street, Chamber of Commerce, IDBA	1	x	x	x	x	x
Establish an Enterprise Zone or Opportunity Zone within the City to encourage redevelopment and infill.	\$10,000	Local, grants	City of Patterson	1	x	x	x		
Update website and create infrastructure to make Patterson a Camera-Ready Community.	Staff time	Local	City of Patterson	1	x	x			
Secure funding for economic development	\$1,000,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	1	x	x	x	x	x
<b>HOUSING</b>									
Develop a redevelopment plan	\$5,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	2		x	x	x	
Redevelop housing in declining areas that will facilitate the provision of affordable housing to low and moderate income families.	\$200,000	USDA/CHIP/CDBG	City of Patterson	2	x	x	x	x	x
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Nominate Downtown Patterson for the National Register of Historic Places.	Staff time	Local and DDA	City of Patterson	4	x				
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>									
Evaluate current water distribution and sewage collection systems, determine and correct deficiencies, and maximize capacity for future growth areas.	\$200,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	5	x	x	x	x	x
Construct walking track/trail	\$200,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	5		x	x	x	x
Construct playground	\$30,000	Local, grants	City of Patterson	5		x			

Pierce County 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Repair tennis courts	\$30,000	Local, grants	City of Patterson	5		x			
Renovate Downtown buildings	\$1,000,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	5		x	x	x	x
Complete renovation of Eagle Station	\$330,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	5	x				
Purchase 1 new fire truck	\$200,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	5	x				
Purchase 1 new police car	\$50,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	5	x				
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>									
Install and/or repair sidewalks in needed places throughout the community.	\$200,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	6	x	x	x	x	x
Repair and/or resurface approximately 3 miles of roads (including drainage improvements), including Industrial Blvd. and Tyre Bridge Road.	\$250,000	Local, State, Federal, grants	City of Patterson	6	x	x	x	x	x

## 7. Land Use Element

### I. Character Areas

In keeping with State Minimum Planning Standards, every part of Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson was delineated into specific Character Areas. Character areas are intended to serve as guidance for future land use and land development. Each of the following character area narratives was developed based on stakeholder input, existing land uses, anticipated development, planned infrastructure improvements and expansions, and guidance found in the *State Planning Recommendations*. As with the Plan in general, these character area descriptions and goals should not be considered final. As the community gains a greater understanding of the role and value of character areas, their descriptions should be fine-tuned. Additionally, as the community continues to grow, specific character area depictions may need adjusting.

Each Character Area narrative has a unique **Description** stating either the existing or desired qualities for that area. (Please note the associated picture for each area represents the current state of the specific area and should not be construed to necessarily represent the desired state, although for some descriptions this may be the case.) The stated **Development Strategy** should serve as a guide for all development and redevelopment taking place in the Character Area. Adherence to these development strategies will ensure consistent and complimentary development, which promotes a greater sense of place and overall improved quality of life. The listing of **Primary Land Uses** provides guidance as to the type of land uses encouraged within each Character Area. As required by the State, the **Quality Community Objectives** demonstrate the unique ideals established for each Character Area. While there is certainly a value to regional planning, planning on the neighborhood (or character area) level allows for greater implementation of specific objectives, which ultimately promotes an improved quality of life. The **Implementation Measures** are the specific activities or programs which could take place within each of the Character Areas. While the suggested list of measures may or may not currently exist in Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, their implementation in appropriate areas would help achieve the established objectives and overall development strategy for each Character Area. In most cases, these measures should be considered joint efforts between the local government, development community, and citizens alike.



### **Residential Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

These areas are predominantly single-family residential, with some limited multi-family residential uses and limited neighborhood commercial uses as well as local amenities such as schools and churches.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Promote and encourage new development in areas of the unincorporated areas that are in close proximity to existing public infrastructure to ensure that the natural resources of the community are not depleted and/or negatively impacted, thus providing a better quality of life for all the citizens of the community.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Resource Management Objective:** Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

**Local Preparedness Objective:** Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

**Housing Options Objective:** Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

1. Permit rural cluster or conservation subdivision design that incorporates significant amounts of open space.
2. Encourage compatible architectural styles that maintain the regional rural character and do not include "franchise" or "corporate" architecture.

3. Develop ordinances that will encourage new development in areas that are in close proximity to reduce sprawl.
4. Develop zoning ordinances to reduce the types and numbers of mobile/manufactured home parks that are created.
5. Promote areas for new development that are in close proximity to existing public infrastructure, i.e. water and sewer.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Single-family residences
- Parks and recreation
- Limited neighborhood-level commercial and public/institutional

### **Neighborhood (Declining) Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

Neighborhoods that have declined sufficiently that housing conditions may be substandard. There may be large areas of vacant or dilapidated, unoccupied structures. This character area specifically describes one major area within the jurisdictional area of the City of Blackshear.

The area is in the western quadrant of the City of Blackshear, where many formerly occupied homes are now vacant. Many of the homes within this area that are still occupied are in very poor condition. This area of Blackshear is predominately inhabited by very low- to low-income families that are in need of housing assistance of one type or another, which could include housing rehabilitation, housing reconstruction, or down-payment assistance for first time home buyers.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Seek and promote new and innovative opportunities for families residing in the declining neighborhoods to live in affordable, standard housing in neighborhoods that are free from slums and blight, thus ensuring a better quality of life for the overall community.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Sense of Place Objective:** Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- Currently, there are no local plans in place to promote infill development anywhere in Pierce County. The infill development would not only have a positive impact on identified declining neighborhoods but would also enable the community to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land.

**Housing Options Objective:** Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

- Housing development within existing neighborhoods should maintain the traditional characteristics of each individual neighborhood. Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson should have ordinances in place to ensure that new development in existing neighborhoods will not compromise the original integrity of those neighborhoods.

***Implementation Measures***

1. Establish a redevelopment strategy for identified declining areas in the City of Blackshear, with a focus on preserving and rehabilitating the original housing stock, while rebuilding on the remaining land new, attractive neighborhoods following the principles of traditional neighborhood development.
2. Develop strong pedestrian and bicycle connections in order to encourage residents to walk or bike to work, shopping, and other destinations in the area.
3. Seek state and federal funding for redevelopment that will provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families.
4. Promote homeownership to low- and moderate-income families through housing programs such as CDBG and CHIP programs.
5. Preserve historic properties where applicable.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Single-family residences on small lots.
- Adaptively reused existing buildings.
- Parks and recreation.
- Mixed-use buildings.
- Neighborhood commercial.

### **Agricultural/Forestry Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

Land specified as Agriculture/Forestry land makes up approximately 88% of all the land in Pierce County. This also includes agriculture/forestry land within the corporate limits of the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson.

As the population of Pierce County continues to grow, property values in some agricultural areas may rise to the point where farming is no longer feasible economically. At this point, prime farmland tends to be sold for residential development. The area in close proximity to the Pierce/Ware County line has seen some rapid development and is likely to face more development pressure in the future.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Promote conservation of agricultural/forestry land in order to preserve the community's rural and agricultural character and to ensure that current and future generations will have an opportunity to continue agri-business production in Pierce County.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Resource Management Objective:** Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

**Sense of Place Objective:** Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- Pierce County is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.
- Pierce County encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage of agriculture.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

1. Enforce large-lot zoning (minimum 10-acre lots) except for approved conservation subdivisions.

2. Use as a receiving area for a wetland mitigation bank.
3. Enforce Best Management Practices (BMP) for land disturbance activities associated with new development, including tree harvesting and utility construction.
4. Prohibit junkyards and equipment storage in areas that would be visible from the highway.
5. Develop and enforce strict ordinances for the development of mobile home parks.
6. Develop and enforce strict ordinances for the installation of single family manufactured/mobile homes.
7. Discourage the extension of public utilities into agricultural areas.
8. Prepare a “right-to-farm” ordinance.
9. Allow limited land splits for heirs.

***Primary Land Use***

- Conservation and natural areas
- Agriculture and/or forestry
- Raising or breeding animals
- Estate residential on lots of no less than 10 acres

### **Employment Center – Industrial Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

This character area consists of industrial land uses and land that is expected to serve as the site for expanding industrial uses in the future. There are currently three industrial parks in Pierce County. Two of these are fully developed and have only small lots (2-5 acres) that are available for existing industries to expand or for potential industries that are looking to locate in the area.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Promote economic development in Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson by enhancing the diversification of the current economic base. Business sector expansion, the support and retention of existing businesses, and the attraction of new business will be the focus of future economic development endeavors. Priority will be given to the full development of the industrial park and educating the existing and future labor force that will better enable the community to attract more diverse industries into the community.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Economic Prosperity Objective:** Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

**Educational Opportunities Objective:** Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

- Okefenokee Technical College provides workforce training options and programs to provide residents with skills for jobs that are currently available in the community. Opportunities for higher education are available in relatively close proximity to Pierce County.

**Local Preparedness Objective:** Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and

staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

- Pierce County, the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, the Pierce County Development Authority, and the Okefenokee Area Development Authority will combine their efforts to identify and put into place a prerequisite for the types of economic diversification that will afford new and better job opportunities to its current and future work force.

**Regional Cooperation Objective:** Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

***Implementation Measures***

1. Analyze local economy composition and industry contribution to determine the community's key industries, how local businesses are performing, what opportunities exist for the local economy, and what gaps in the industry mix could be filled to enhance the local economy.
2. Establish a process for identifying businesses that best suit the community.
3. Find and/or create the training resources that are needed by the local workforce. These should include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs. Such training resources are especially critical in the area of technology.
4. Explore incorporating capital improvements programs.
5. Evaluate various financing methods for new infrastructure.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Heavy and light industries
- Warehouse/distribution
- Wholesale trade
- Residential use is not appropriate.



### **Employment Center – Commercial/Office Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

Commercial and office types of land uses, typically automobile-oriented and located along major highways. These employment centers provide opportunities to expand the County's economic base.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Continue to promote commercial development along major highways in the community, especially within the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, thus enhancing the diversification of the current economic base and generating new revenues.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Economic Prosperity Objective:** Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

- Pierce County has little diversity within its current economic base. Commercial shopping centers and available office space will appeal to commercial companies looking to locate within smaller communities.
- Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, along with Development Authority, should promote these types of industries in the community. These employment centers provide opportunities to expand the County's economic base and to bring in employers who will provide high-paying professional job opportunities to the current and future work force.
- A limited portion of the current labor force is considered to be skilled labor, which presents a challenge to the community in recruiting industries that require a large number of skilled personnel. However, certain areas, including an office complex in the City of Blackshear, have helped to create more high-paying professional jobs for the community.
- Pierce County and the City of Blackshear should continue to promote this type of commercial/office development within the community.

**Local Preparedness Objective:** Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

- Pierce County, the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson, and the Pierce County Development Authority will combine their efforts to identify and put into place a prerequisite for the types of economic diversification that will afford new and better job opportunities to the current and future work force.

**Regional Cooperation Objective:** Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

***Implementation Measures***

1. Enforce zoning and land development regulations for high-intensity uses in order to reduce sprawl and enable local governments to better manage future development.
2. Organize County-wide recruiting efforts to attract appropriate employers based on the high quality of life in Pierce County.
3. Require traffic studies for new development in known congested areas.
4. Consider land use transitions to adjacent uses.
5. Require aesthetic and building material standards for buildings, signs, and landscaping.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Commercial
- Office

### **Downtown Character Areas**



#### ***Land Use Description***

This character area consists of the historic downtown commercial areas of Blackshear and Patterson. The primary land use is high-density commercial/office/retail in a walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Promote revitalization and encourage new businesses to move in and fill vacant storefronts. Promote streetscape aesthetics to create an appealing environment (for example, by providing benches, planters, crosswalks, etc.). Promote and preserve the historic character of each downtown area.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Sense of Place Objective:** Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

**Regional Cooperation Objective:** Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

***Implementation Measures***

1. Look for funding avenues that will assist both Cities in providing incentives to local and outside entrepreneurs to expand or located in the downtown areas.
2. Require aesthetic and building material standards for buildings, signs, and landscaping for commercial properties, office space, and shopping centers.
3. Continue to work on the National Register nomination process for the downtown areas of Blackshear and Patterson.
4. Consider developing zoning techniques for mixed-use zoning that allows different types of use, such as housing, commercial, and office, to locate within the downtown areas, provided that the uses are reasonably compatible.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Retail space
- Office
- Mixed-use development
- Residential uses above storefront space

### **Public/Institutional Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

This character area consists of large sites of a public or institutional type, such as schools, colleges and universities, large churches, hospitals, and government facilities.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Development of new facilities within this character area should take place at a scale that is compatible with surrounding uses. New developments should be accessible by a variety of transportation options.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Local Preparedness Objective:** Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

**Educational Opportunities Objective:** Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

1. Implement a balance of transportation options and design.
2. Encourage development of essential facilities in locations where they can be conveniently accessed.
3. Encourage development of new public/institutional uses at a scale that is compatible with surrounding uses.

#### ***Primary Land Uses***

- Public/Institutional

### **Parks/Recreation/Conservation Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

Undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development, such as scenic views, steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas. This character area includes the Little Satilla and Satilla Rivers and the recharge areas(s) in Pierce County.

Approximately 50% of Pierce County lies within watershed boundaries of the Little Satilla River, while the remaining 50% of the County lies within the watershed boundaries of the Satilla River. The Little Satilla River is one of the main tributaries for the Satilla River. Development is expected to continue occurring in the unincorporated areas of Pierce County, encroaching on these vitally important environmentally sensitive areas.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Continue and revise new methods to protect rivers, groundwater recharge areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas within the County to ensure a better quality of life for the present and future population of the County as a whole. As Pierce County continues to grow in future years, it will become increasingly important to protect conservation areas and areas designated as greenspace, watersheds, and environmentally sensitive areas such as recharge areas, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and park/recreation areas.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Resource Management Objective:** Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

- Pierce County has identified defining natural resources and understands the importance of taking measures to better protect these important rivers to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy fishing, boating, and other related water sports that will disappear if environmental protection objectives for this character area are not addressed.
- Pierce County is served through the Department of Agriculture's Office of Soil Conservation, which assess and reviews all projects where new development is to occur. However, the County must develop, adopt, and enforce more stringent ordinance(s) that will ensure potable water that is not contaminated through new development in areas that could negatively impact the only known groundwater recharge area of Pierce County.

**Sense of Place Objective:** Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- Pierce County should discourage new development along its rivers to ensure the traditional character of the rivers and their surroundings reflect the rural traditions and a sense of place.

***Implementation Measures***

1. Adopt a River Corridor Protection ordinance to designate the Little Satilla River, the Alabaha River, and the Satilla River as protected rivers.
2. Adopt a Groundwater Recharge Area Protection ordinance consistent with the Environmental Planning Criteria to ensure more control over new development.
3. Adopt a Water Supply Watershed Protection ordinance consistent with Georgia's Environmental Planning Criteria, limiting imperviousness within the watershed to no more than 25 percent.
4. Identify appropriate areas and funding sources for fee simple acquisition.
5. Require open space conservation subdivisions to incorporate designated greenways and trails.
6. Enforce BMPs for any land disturbance activities, including utility construction.
7. Perform a study to determine the cost feasibility and joint County/City participation in the infrastructure network.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Conservation and natural areas.
- Recreation features of minimal impact such as trails or paths.

### **Transportation/Communication/Utilities Character Area**



#### ***Land Use Description***

This character area includes major highways, railroads, and utilities. There are three major highways that traverse Pierce County. These main thoroughfares are US Highways 84/SR38; State Route 15/121; and State Route 32. At present, all these highways adequately meet the current traffic demands, with the exception of certain intersections along US Highway 84 in Blackshear. These areas are becoming more congested with new development.

#### ***Development Strategy***

Provide adequate ingress/egress in areas of high congestion that will not only ensure public safety but will improve potential problem areas in order to continue attracting new shopping complexes, commercial office centers, etc. into the area.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

**Sense of Place Objective:** Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

**Transportation Options Objective:** Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

- Pierce County has a rural transit system; expanded service hours are desired.
- Pierce County lacks alternative transportation facilities, i.e. bicycle/pedestrian.

**Resource Management Objective:** Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

**Local Preparedness Objective:** Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to



support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

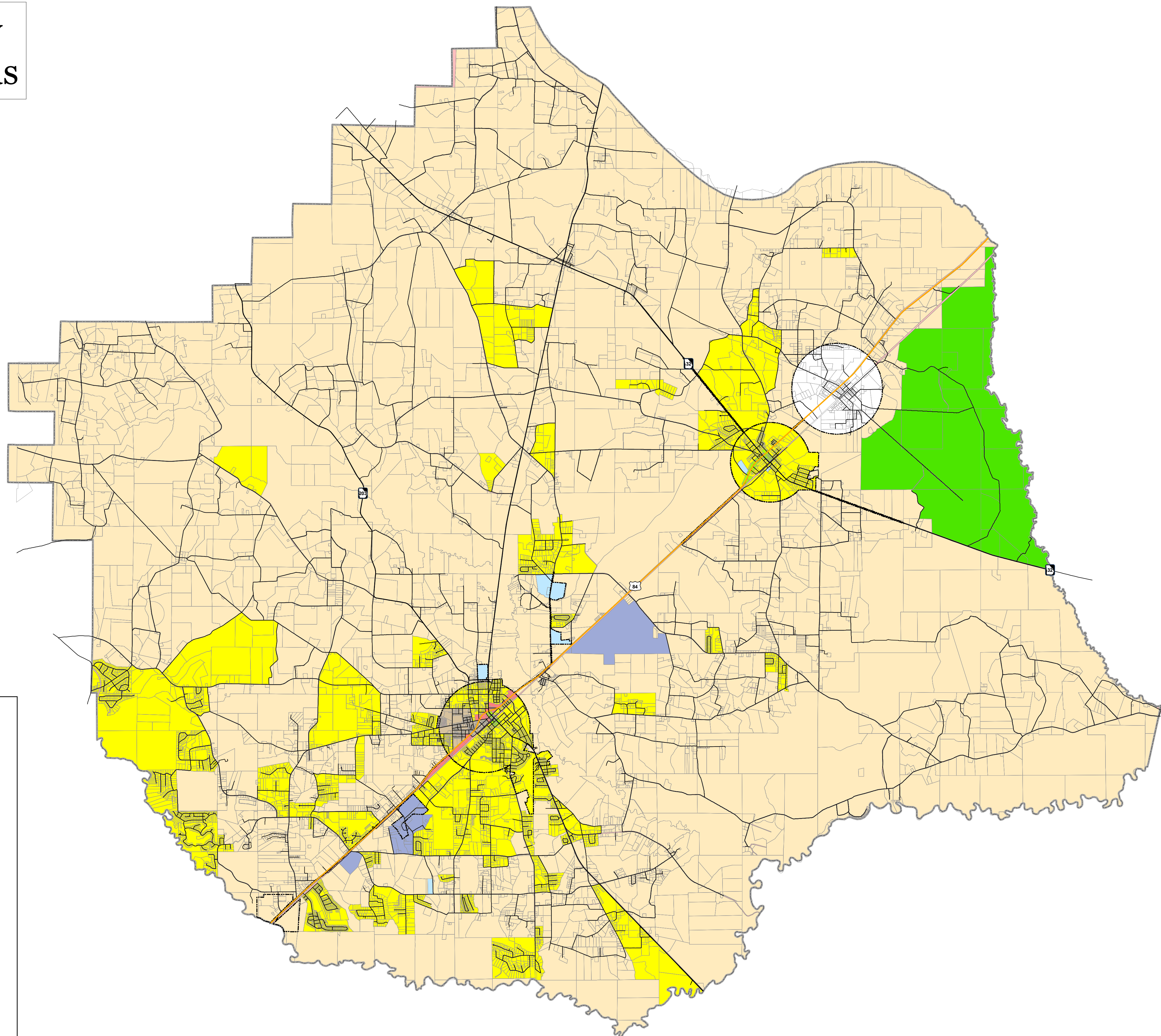
***Implementation Measures***

1. Work closely with Georgia DOT and others in developing corridor congestion management plan with functional classifications to determine curves, cuts, and access points along Highway 84 where potential congestion will occur.
2. Develop and adopt a rights-of-way ordinance for future development, including commercial, industrial, and residential development.
3. Promote street design that fosters alternative means of transportation through the creation of a community-wide pedestrian/bike path network.
4. Continue to identify road intersections that are a threat to public safety; organize a system for upgrading and modifying road design in order to increase public safety.

***Primary Land Uses***

- Transportation and utilities

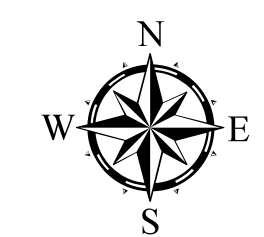
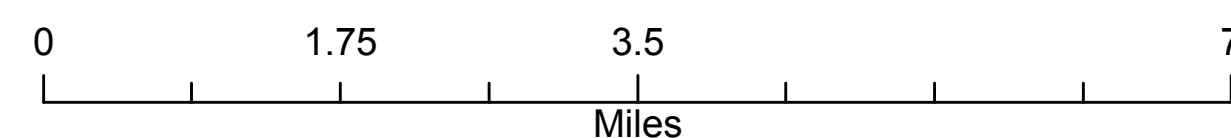
# Pierce County Character Areas



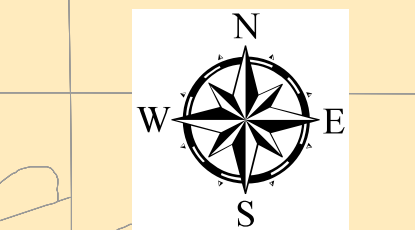
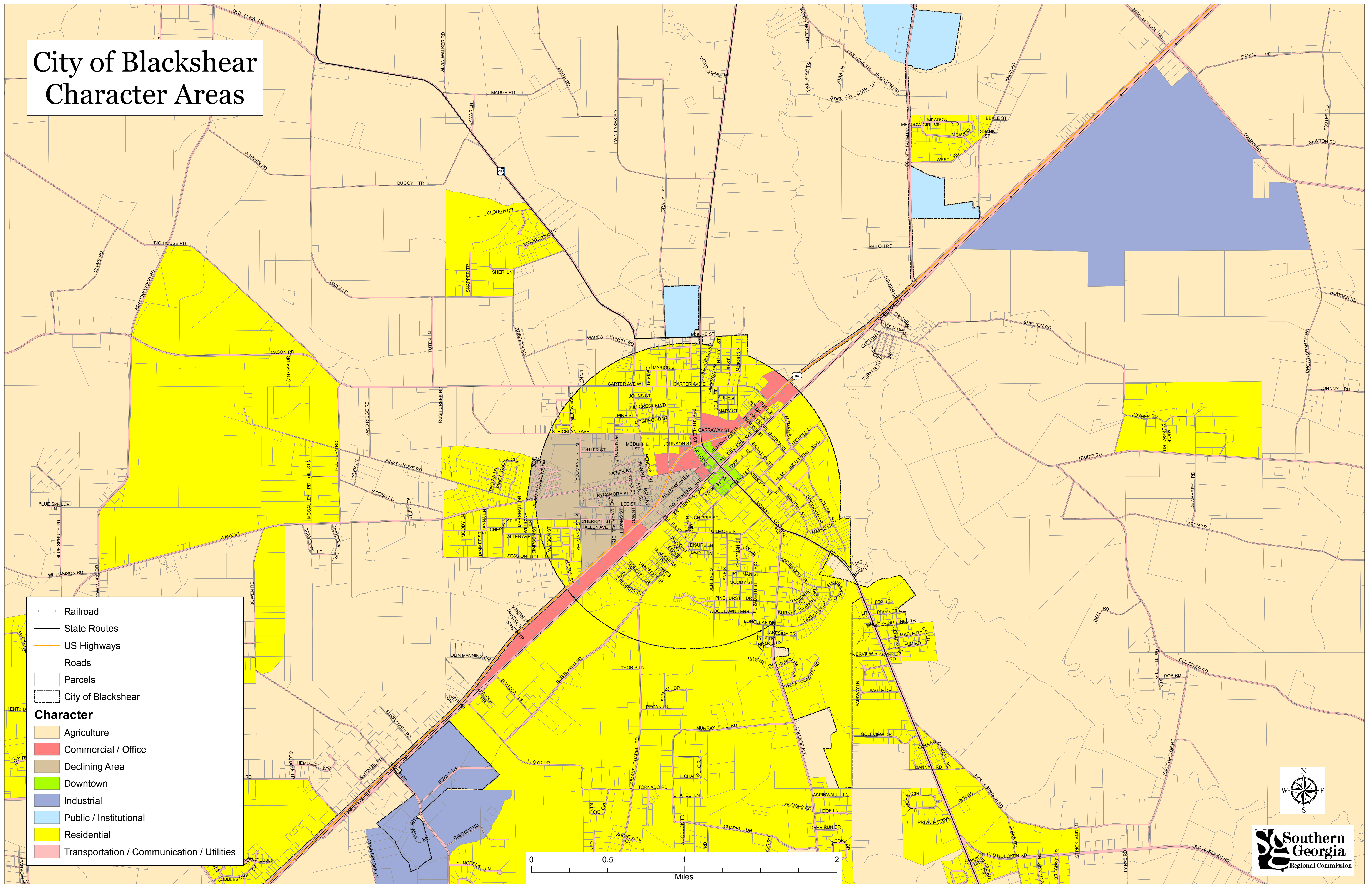
— State Routes  
 — US Highways  
 — Local Roads  
 □ Parcels  
 □ Cities  
 □ County Boundary

**Character**

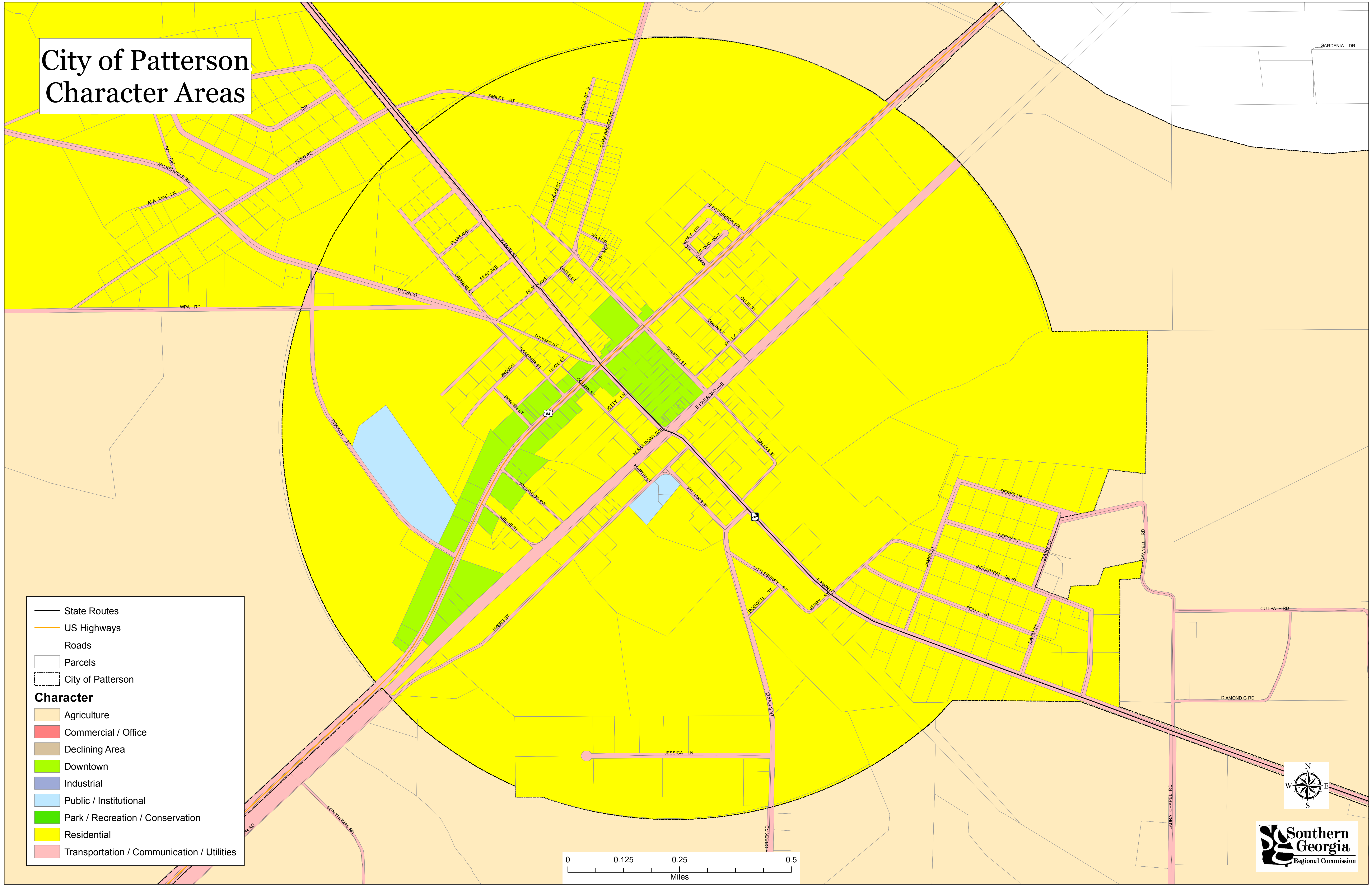
- Agriculture
- Commercial / Office
- Declining Area
- Downtown
- Industrial
- Public / Institutional
- Park / Recreation / Conservation
- Residential
- Transportation / Communication / Utilities



# City of Blackshear Character Areas



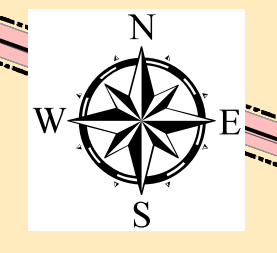
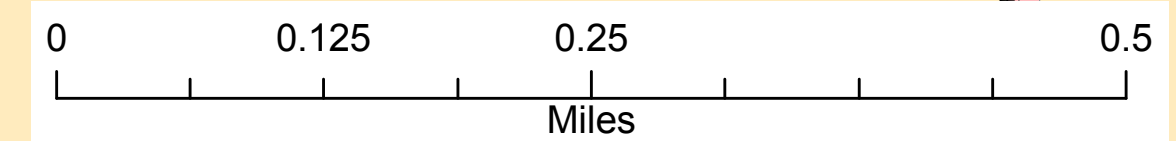
# City of Patterson Character Areas



— State Routes  
 — US Highways  
 — Roads  
 □ Parcels  
 □ City of Patterson

**Character**

- Agriculture
- Commercial / Office
- Declining Area
- Downtown
- Industrial
- Public / Institutional
- Park / Recreation / Conservation
- Residential
- Transportation / Communication / Utilities



# **Appendix**

**Sign-In Sheets**  
**Public Hearing Notices**  
**Transmittal Letters**  
**Adoption Resolutions**  
**Public Comments**

Page 10 • The Blackshear Times • Wednesday, December 14, 2016

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **Joint Public Hearing For Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update**

A public meeting will be held at 5:30 PM on January 3, 2017 at Pierce County Ag Center (second floor), 705 College Ave. Blackshear, GA 31516 to announce the beginning of the 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the Comprehensive Plan, announce opportunities for public participation in development of the plan and obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the Pierce County Commission Office at 912-449-2022. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service at 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the Public Hearing. If you would like more information, please contact the Pierce County Joint Planning Commission at 912-449-2037 or contact Ariel Godwin at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission at (229) 333-5277.

88121419ppjc

Page 10 • The Blackshear Times • Wednesday, April 19, 2017

**We sell & repair golf carts!**



**5 POINTS  
GOLF CARTS**  
912 449 3818

**•504 Lee St. • Blackshear • 449-3818**

# News Br

## Award winning play held tomorrow

In five autobiographical vignettes, Katherine N. LeRoy under the direction of Katie Rasor Newell, will tell Charlayne Woodard's moving tale of her African-American family through three generations of love, struggle, and triumph. Although this performance shares the personal life story of Woodard and her family -- it offers universal experiences for its audience to thoroughly enjoy. This humorous and touching one-woman tour de force has won numerous theatre awards for Best Play and Best Playwright.

A performance will be held Thursday, Apr. 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the Educational Building Auditorium on the Waycross Campus. Following each performance, a silent auction of art related items and dessert reception will be held.

General admission tick-

**WE BUY TIMBER**



**BIG AND SMALL TRACTS**

**SPUD CORBETT** | **JEFFREY PARR**  
912-337-4823 | 912-288-3596

## PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing to review and transmit the Joint 2017 Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review will be held at 5:00 p.m. on May 8th, 2017 at the NFC Building/Pierce County Ag Center, 2nd floor, 705 College Ave., Blackshear. Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning process. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the Planning Commission office and at the City Hall of each city, and for download at the SGRC website: <http://www.sgrc.us/community-and-economic-development.html>.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact Pierce County at (912) 449-2022. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Ariel Godwin, SGRC Planner, at (229) 333-5277.

27b041917pp.jc

Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
 Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson  
 Comprehensive Plan Update – Kick-off  
 January 3, 2017

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Amy Hitt	PCBOC	912.449.2022	amy.hitt@piercecountyga.gov
Stevie Layson	" "	" "	Stevie.Layson@piercecountyga.gov
Mike Street	" "	" "	MA STREET 75@gmail.com
Neri Bennett	PCBOC	" "	neri.bennett@piercecountyga.gov
Randy Dixon	PCBOC	912.449.2022	Randy@piercecountyga.gov
Lanier Walker	PCBOC	912.449.2022	alwalker50@hotmail.com
Ransy Bennett	Home Cast Studio	912.449.2011	ransy.bennett@piercecountyga.gov
Pauline Knudde	PC Citizen	912.449.5464	
Emma D Knudde	PC Citizen	912.449.5464	
Maegie P. Wallack	PC Citizen	912.449.1394	
Rene' Bolden	Main Street Manager	912.288.0882	rbolden@visitblackshear.com
Toby Harris	PCSDC	912.449.2022	toby.harris@piercecountyga.gov
Lelance Gay	PCBOE	912.449.2044	lgay@pierce.k12.ga.us
Matt Carter	PCIDA	912.807.7432	matcarter@piercecountyga.gov
Bucky Goble	City of Blackshear	912.590.5707	buckygoble@gmail.com
<i>[Signature]</i>	PC Planning Chairman	912.550.7975	Tom@Dedward.net



Southern Georgia Regional Commission Pierce County and the Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update – Kick-off January 3, 2017			
Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Dee Brown	Pierce County Joint Planning	912-449-2037	dell.brown@piercecountyga.gov
Aniel Godwin	SGRC	229-338-5237	agodwin@sgrc.us

**Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Commission Comprehensive Plan Update**  
Workshop 1 -- Feb. 7, 2017

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Michael A Street	County Commission	District 2	MAStreet75@gmail.com
Steve H. Layson	Co. Mgr. BOC		Steve.Layson@piercecountyga.org
Teresa Concaunon	DEA	Housing Outreach Grnd.	Teresa.concaunon@dea.ga.gov
Neri Bennett	PC BOC	Chairman	Neri.bennett@piercecountyga.org
Randy Dixon	PC BOC	District 3	randy@piercefinher.com
Matt Carter	PC IDA	Executive Director	matt.carter@piercecountyga.org
Rene' Bolden	Main Street Manager	=	rbolden@visitblackshear.com
Angela Menden	PC Chamber of Commerce	Exec. Director	priedamended@commercemail.com
Bucky Cobb	City of Blackshear	Fin Dir	buckygobb@gmail.com
Lanier Walker	PCBOC	Comm Dir	alwalker@hohail.com

**Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update  
Workshop 2 – March 7, 2017**

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	planner	agodwin@sgrc.us
Dee Brown	Pierce County Smart Plans	Director	deebrown@piercecountyga.gov
Tubby Williamson	Pierce County Planning Comm.	Patterson District	jaguill@accessata.net
Laura Early	Satilla Riverkeeper	Riverkeeper/EO	riverkeeper@satillariverkeeper.org
Kanier Walker	PCC	commissioner	kwalker80@hotmail.com
Matt Carter	PCIDA	Director	matt.carter@piercecountyga.gov
Rene Bolden	Main Street	Manager	rbolden@visitblackshear.com
Rae Cunningham	City of Patterson	clerk	eaglestation2013@gmail.com
Angela Manders	PCHamber	Exec. Director	piercechamber@piercecountyga.gov
Keith Brooks	City of Blackshear	City Council	Pbrooks2430@Icloud.com
Bucky Gohl	City of Blackshear	Fire Chief	buckygohl@gmail.com
Teresa Connaman	DCA	Housing Authority	teresa.connaman@dca-rga.gov
MIKE Strat	PC Bot Comm	Commissioner	S.AS Above
Kerold Pover	P.C. BOC	1st Dist. Commissioner	kpover@accessata.net

**Southern Georgia Regional Commission**  
**Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update**  
 Workshop 3 – April 4, 2017

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Dell Brown	Pierce County Joint Planning	Director	dell.brown@piercecountyga.gov
Jan W. Long	Pierce County Joint Planning	Vice Chair	long@pierce.k12.ga.us
Tommy Spivey	Pierce County Joint Planning	Chairman	Tommy@spivey.net
Judith Williamson	Pierce County Joint Planning	City of Patterson	jagwill@accessat.net
Leessa Conaway	DECA	Housing Outreach Coordinator	leessa.conaway@deca.ga.gov
Keith Brooks	City of Blackshear	Councilman	brooks2430@icloud.com
Steve Long	PC BOC	Manager	steve.long@piercecountyga.gov
Harold Brewer	PC BOC	1st District	haroldbrewer@accessat.net
Tammie Ridenour	PC BOC	Manager	county.manager@piercecountyga.gov
Matt Carter	PE FIDA	Executive Director	matt.carter@piercecountyga.gov
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	Planner	agodwin@sgrc.us
Linda Zeckmann	PC BOC	Board Member	lzeckmann@smail.com
LeBronce Gay	PCBOE	Asst. Super.	lgay@p.pierce.k12.ga.us
Nora Bennett	PCBOC	Chairman	nora.bennett@piercecountyga.gov
Mike Stur	PCBDC	Commissioner	

## PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

---



NEAL BENNETT, CHAIRMAN  
HAROLD ROZIER, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1  
MIKE STREAT, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2  
RANDY DIXON, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3  
LANIER WALKER, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4

April 25, 2017

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
327 West Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

Pierce County has completed an update of its Comprehensive Plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Jason Rubenauer, County Manager, at (912) 449-2022 or [county.manager@piercecountyga.gov](mailto:county.manager@piercecountyga.gov).

Sincerely,

Neal Bennett, Chairman  
Pierce County Board of Commissioners

RICHARD E. LARSON  
Mayor

SUSAN FOWLER  
City Clerk

ADAM FERRELL  
City Attorney

CHRIS WRIGHT  
Chief of Police

DONNIE HARRIS  
Supt. of Public Works

BUCKY GOBLE  
Fire Chief

# City of Blackshear

POST OFFICE BOX 268  
BLACKSHEAR, GEORGIA 31516  
PHONE (912) 449-7000  
FAX (912) 449-7002

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:  
MARY LOTT WALKER  
Mayor Pro-Tem

MELVIN JOHNSON

KEITH BROOKS

JERRY DIXON

TIMMY SAPP

DAVID O. SMITH

April 25, 2017

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
327 West Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The City of Blackshear has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Susan Fowler, City Clerk, at (912) 449-7000 or [sfowler@blackshearga.com](mailto:sfowler@blackshearga.com).

Sincerely,

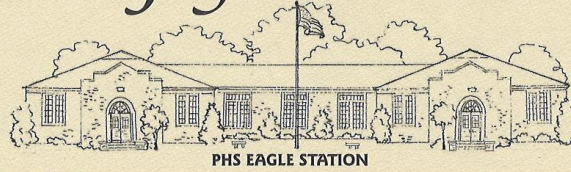


Dick Larson, Mayor  
City of Blackshear

*Looking to the Future - Remembering the Past*

# City of Patterson

P.O. Box 434  
3507 Williams Street  
Patterson, Georgia 31557



Phone 912.647.5776  
Fax 912.647.5157  
[www.thecityofpatterson.com](http://www.thecityofpatterson.com)

April 25, 2017

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
327 West Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

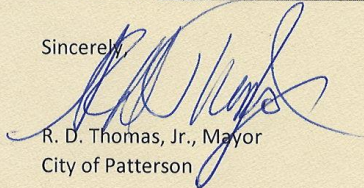
The City of Patterson has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Ray Cunningham, City Clerk, at (912) 647-5776 or [eaglestation2013@gmail.com](mailto:eaglestation2013@gmail.com).

Sincerely,



R. D. Thomas, Jr., Mayor  
City of Patterson

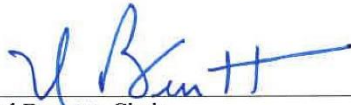
**PIERCE COUNTY**  
**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT**  
**2017 JOINT PIERCE COUNTY**  
**AND CITIES OF BLACKSHEAR AND PATTERSON**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, Pierce County has completed the 2017 Joint Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update;

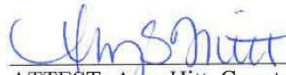
**WHEREAS**, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that Pierce County does hereby adopt the 2017 Joint Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2017.



Neal Bennett, Chair  
Pierce County Commission



ATTEST: Amy Hitt, County Clerk



**CITY OF PATTERSON – RESOLUTION 2017-001**

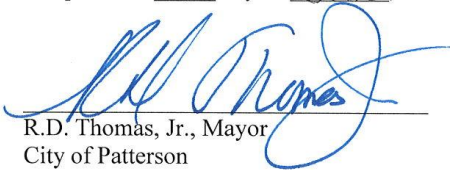
**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
2017 JOINT PIERCE COUNTY  
AND CITIES OF BLACKSHEAR AND PATTERSON  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Patterson has completed the 2017 Joint Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update;

**WHEREAS**, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the City of Patterson does hereby adopt the 2017 Joint Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 8 day of June, 2017.

  
R.D. Thomas, Jr., Mayor  
City of Patterson

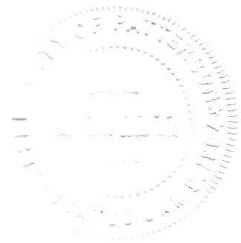
  
ATTEST: Ray Cunningham, City Clerk

  
Jake Echols, Councilmember

(Absent)  
Teresa Leggett, Councilmember

  
David Smith, Councilmember

  
Joan Teglas, Councilmember



**RESOLUTION 2017-10  
ADOPT 2017 JOINT PIERCE COUNTY  
AND CITIES OF BLACKSHEAR AND PATTERSON  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Blackshear has completed the 2017 Joint Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update;

**WHEREAS**, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the City of Blackshear does hereby adopt the 2017 Joint Pierce County and Cities of Blackshear and Patterson Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of **June, 2017**.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Dick Larson, Mayor  
City of Blackshear



\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST: Susan Fowler, City Clerk

**From:** Steve Layson <steve.layson@piercecountyga.gov>

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 5, 2017 7:34 AM

**To:** Ariel Godwin

**Subject:** FW: Pierce Comp Plan meeting

**Attachments:** SLEUTH2030.png

fyi

**From:** piercechamberofcommerce [mailto:piercechamberofcommerce@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 04, 2017 3:33 PM

**To:** Amy Hitt <amy.hitt@piercecountyga.gov>; Matt Carter <matt.carter@piercecountyga.gov>; Steve Layson

<Steve.layson@piercecountyga.gov>

**Subject:** Fwd: Pierce Comp Plan meeting

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Satilla Riverkeeper" <[riverkeeper@satillariverkeeper.org](mailto:riverkeeper@satillariverkeeper.org)>

Date: Apr 4, 2017 1:17 PM

Subject: Pierce Comp Plan meeting

To: "piercechamberofcommerce" <[piercechamberofcommerce@gmail.com](mailto:piercechamberofcommerce@gmail.com)>

Cc:

Hi Angela,

I believe this meeting you'll be looking at character areas. I attached a map below that shows where urban/developed areas already exist (in black), and where they are expected to grow by 2030 (in the bubbles around the black). I would suggest thinking about this when designating residential and commercial areas on the new character area maps.

For water quality protection, it is important to preserve undeveloped land, timber land, and agricultural land; and to concentrate development, rather than have it spread out across the landscape. It's also very important to have a natural vegetated buffer along streams and rivers to protect the water quality, habitat for fish and wildlife, and the user experience on the river. If that could be drawn into the character area maps, that would be awesome!

Thanks,  
Laura

Laura Early

Office: (912) 510-9500

Toll-Free: (866) 472-8452

Connect with us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#)!

*We appreciate your **support** of our mission to protect, restore and educate about the Satilla River!*

